

Sight and Sound

Brian De Palma
in interview
'Blade Runner':
Deckard's dilemma
On set in China
with **Chen Kaige**

**TOP 10
FILMS**

**250 CRITICS
AND DIRECTORS
REVEAL THEIR
CHOICES**



**Tim Roth as dead meat in
Reservoir Dogs**

神戸映画大賞'93

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Sight and Sound
(incorporating Monthly
Film Bulletin)
Volume 2 Issue 8 (NS)
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US distribution
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1130 Cleveland Road
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Annual subscription rates
UK £25.00
Europe/overseas
surface mail £30.00
Europe airmail £32.00
Overseas airmail £52.00
Special rates apply to BFI
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Leicestershire LE16 9EF
Telephone 0858 468888
Facsimile 0858 434958
Binders available from
Sight and Sound marketing
department; UK £7.00,
overseas surface mail £9.00
Sight and Sound is part of the
Research Division, BFI



Published monthly by the
British Film Institute
ISSN 0037-4806

Sight and Sound



'Nights at the Opera': 10



Blade Runner's new cut: 8



Top Ten: 18

Features

THE MEN'S ROOM

Reservoir Dogs and *Man Bites Dog* are just two of a new wave of shudderingly visceral films. Are they a sign of moral decadence or of a new cinematic life? Amy Taubin, on *Dogs*; B. Ruby Rich, on international art-house violence **2**

BLADE RUNNER: TELLING THE DIFFERENCE

Does the newly released director's cut show that Deckard is a replicant? By Philip Strick **8**

NIGHTS AT THE OPERA

In Beijing, Chen Kaige shoots *Farewell to My Concubine*, the first gay movie in contemporary China. Tony Rayns visits the set **10**

OUT OF THE ASHES

Brian De Palma talks about his new film, laughter, doubles and the visual grammar of Hitchcock. By Peter Keough **14**

OVERWHELMING BODIES

From *Psycho* to *Robocop*. Surrealist preoccupations with the body live on. By Mike O'Pray **16**

TOP TEN: 250 VERDICTS

Directors from Scorsese to Fellini, and critics from Hong Kong to Los Angeles and London reveal their top ten films in this ten-yearly event **18**

Plus Ian Christie on the changing cinematic canon **31**

And Ginette Vincendeau on the greatness of Renoir's *La Règle du jeu* and its place in French cinema **34**

Regulars

OBSSESSION Howard Schuman on *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* **39**

LETTERS Tom Mix, short films, *Metropolis* again **63**

IF... Benjamin Woolley on wide-screen television **64**

Cover photograph by Nick White

Film reviews

Blue Ice	40
Death Becomes Her	41
Diggstown see Midnight Sting	43
Don't Move, Die and Rise Again!/Zamri, Umri, Voskresni!	54
Electric Moon	42
Elenya	43
Midnight Sting	43
Mo' Money	44
Peter's Friends	45
Raising Cain	46
Simple Men	47
Sister Act	48
Slacker	49
Sneakers	50
Tetsuo II: Bodyhammer	51
This Is My Life	52
Waterdance, The	53
Zamri, Umri, Voskresni!/Don't Move, Die and Rise Again!	54
TELEVISION FILMS	
Bye, Bye, Baby	55
Running Late	56
Seconds Out	57

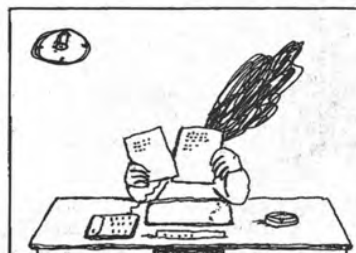
Video reviews

Mark Kermode and William Green on this month's video releases **58**

**Next issue on sale
15 December**

JERRY ON LINE #1

James Sillavan - Peter Lydon ©



'Jerry, I'm looking at this press office list of my top 10 movies. Three of them I haven't seen, which is fine; two I've never heard of, that's acceptable... but to suggest I could like a film with 'Bourgeoisie' in the title... Jerry check it out please.'

A new wave of harshly visceral, as well as highly regarded, films are due to break in Britain. Are they signs of moral decadence or the emergence of a new aesthetic? Here, Amy Taubin writes on 'Reservoir Dogs'; overleaf, B. Ruby Rich, on the new cinematic violence

THE MEN'S ROOM



● Tim Roth came to the US to act in the kind of films that aren't happening in Britain, the kind of films, he says, that Alan Clarke would be making if he were still alive. Roth made his television film debut in 1983 as the ferocious skinhead in Clarke's *Made in Britain*, then followed with Mike Leigh's *Meantime*, as part of an ensemble that included Gary Oldman and Phil Daniels. "That's what I thought film-making was", he says ruefully.

Currently Roth can be seen on screen in New York and Paris in Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*, coming soon to wherever else the international language of male violence is spoken. The film's structure is pegged to the length of time it takes for a man – Roth's character, Mr Orange – to bleed to death in front of our eyes. How's that for preserving the dramatic unities?

The debut film of director/writer Tarantino, *Reservoir Dogs*, a bungled heist movie, was notorious even before it premiered at the 1992 Sundance Film Festival. It did not win a prize; reportedly, the jury felt that since Tarantino had already catapulted, at age twenty-nine, on to the Hollywood 'A' list, he didn't need its help, reducing the status of the competition to a charity agency. Especially as the film that did win was Alexandre Rockwell's *In the Soup*, a more innocuous male-bonding film, which, like *Reservoir Dogs*, soft-shoes around the connection between independent film-making and gangsterism.

Cover-story material for the *L. A. Weekly*, the *Village Voice*, *Postif*, and a slue of dailies, Tarantino's bio is already common knowledge: how he obsessively watched movies from the age of five; how he never went to film school, but honed his skills by simultaneously working in a video store (where he had unlimited access to the *oeuvres* of his heroes Peckinpah, Leone, Scorsese, Ferrara, Argento, De Palma, Schrader), writing scripts (almost all of which are now in production), and attending acting classes (he had some bit parts on television).

Tarantino originally intended to make *Reservoir Dogs* in 16mm for \$30,000. Then a friend got the script to Harvey Keitel. Keitel's commitment attracted several million dollars and the stellar cast. To the *L. A. Weekly*, Tarantino confessed to being, as a child, "amazed at the genius of the concept of a horror film and a comedy together" in Abbott-and-Costello monster movies. To anyone who suggests a moral queasiness about *Reservoir Dogs*' *pièce de résistance* – a ten-minute real-time torture scene in which a psychopath slices up a cop's face, hacks off his ear, and then asks him, "Was that as good for you as it was for me?" – Tarantino responds: "I love violence in the movies". Such surly moments notwithstanding, Tarantino is universally described as charming, enthusiastic, inspirational – precisely the adjectives that were applied to Ross Perot, although not exactly by the same people.

Reservoir Dogs opens with its other *pièce de résistance* – a pre-credit sequence in which a bunch of small-time hoods, breakfasting in a Southern California fast-food joint, engage

Killing games: Tim Roth, as Mr Orange, in the last stages of his enduring agony, waits for the end, opposite; Harvey Keitel, doing what comes naturally, top



in a close textual analysis of Madonna's 'Like a Virgin'. "Let me tell you what 'Like a Virgin' is about", says Mr Brown (played by Tarantino). "It's all about a girl who digs a guy with a big dick. The entire song, it's a metaphor for big dicks... it hurts, it hurts her... The pain is reminding a fuck machine what it once was like to be a virgin. Hence, 'Like a Virgin'".

The conversation turns into a debate over the ethics of tipping waitresses. "Jesus Christ, these ladies aren't starving, they make minimum wage", objects Mr Pink (Steve Buscemi) when his buddies try to shame him into leaving his buck on the table just like everybody else. To the nostalgic bubblegum rhythms of K-Billy Radio's 'Super Sounds of the Seventies', the group swaggers into the street. Dressed in identical sleazy black suits, narrow black ties and white shirts, they look as if they had migrated down from a poster for, if not the actual celluloid of, Aki Kaurismäki's *Calamari Union*, an influence Tarantino has never to my knowledge cited. The credits roll.

Cut to the interior of a car, where Mr Orange is spurting blood from a bullet in the gut (only his red-soaked shirt, already stuck to his skin, keeps his intestines from protruding). Convulsing, he's begging Mr White, who's driving, to take him to a hospital. Mr White insists that they proceed to a pre-arranged rendez-vous point, a cavernous, fluorescent-lit warehouse (the basic location of the film).

With Mr Orange lapsing in and out of consciousness, sprawled on the floor in an ever-deepening pool of his own blood, Mr White and the speedy Mr Pink try to piece together what went wrong. They and the other "professionals" had been hired by bossman Joe Cabot (Lawrence Tierney) and his hulking son Nice Guy Eddie (Chris Penn) to carry out a major dia-

mond heist. The robbers have never met before; their colour-coded pseudonyms are intended to protect their identities. Unfortunately, the cops show up before the heist is completed. The hoods shoot their way out, blowing away cops and "real people". The survivors are left to ponder who among them is the stooly.

Information accumulates a-chronologically. The set up and aftermath of the heist (although never the heist itself) are revealed in flashback through the points of view of the various participants. Relishing the dramatic irony, Tarantino reveals the identity of the undercover cop half way through the film, implicating the audience in his point of view and the helplessness of his position. In this world, knowledge gets you nowhere. When the icy psycho Mr Blonde (Michael Madsen, who played Susan Sarandon's concerned boyfriend in *Thelma & Louise*) arrives with a young cop he's kidnapped during the getaway, the violence escalates. By the final blackout, the warehouse is as littered with corpses as the halls of Elsinore.

Though the theatricality of the *mise en scène* and the emphasis on play-acting makes the Shakespearean association inevitable, *Reservoir Dogs* is hardly a tragedy. Hyperbolically visceral and self-conscious (it's the combo that gives the film its bigger bang per buck), it's a black comedy of manners that both brags on and derides its genre and its characters.

Tarantino tips his hand in his bravura set pieces. The undercover cop prepares for his "interview" with the boss like a method actor rehearsing an audition piece. Identity is a fabrication; lies are as convincing as truth, provided they reference a collective cultural experience and are told with an improvisatory abandon. An event that never happened is given equal screen time. And why not? Isn't ►

Amy Taubin talks to Tim Roth about class, acting – and why Tarantino's 'Reservoir Dogs' upsets people

No actor, not even Ben Gazzara in John Cassavetes' 'The Killing of a Chinese Bookie', has ever bled as long, agonisingly, and profusely as Tim Roth in 'Reservoir Dogs'. It's a performance of amazingly technical skill, emotional intensity, and, odd as it may sound, comic nuance. Part of what drives Roth as an actor is a fierce working-class loyalty that encompasses punks and bohemians, cops and criminals, the mad and the lumpen – all of them aligned against 'yuppies', 'suits' and 'tea-cup holders'.

Roth was brought up politically active. His father was a left-wing journalist; his mother is still an activist. "When I was a kid, we'd go boycott the National Front. Then I got political myself". His father had been a tail gunner in the Second World War. After the war he changed his name from Smith to Roth. "As a journalist he was travelling to places where the English weren't welcome, which meant just about anywhere. I like to think he took a German-Jewish name as a political statement".

In his last year of secondary school, Roth auditioned for a play "as a joke" and got the part. "I was very embarrassed. The first night, I got on stage and I pissed in my pants. It sounds like one of those actor tales, but it's true. I got through the first five minutes, and then I thought, this is it, this is what I want to do now, this is the most fun I can possibly have".

He went to art school, but dropped out when acting in pub theatres began to take up all his time. His first screen role was in Alan Clarke's 'Made in Britain' and he hasn't stopped working since. "Alan was the best. I saw 'Scum' ten times. After he died, there were all these Alan Clarke actors walking around London moaning 'what are we going to do now'".

About a year and a half ago Roth came to the US to do 'Jumpin' at the Boneyard', an \$850,000 indie by first-time director/writer Jeff Stanzler, shot on location in the Bronx. Roth plays an unemployed, massively depressed Irish-American who's desperately trying to save his crack-addicted younger brother. 'Boneyard' has some predictable first-film problems, but it deals with class and race in a way that's rare in American movies.

Roth went straight from 'Boneyard' to 'Reservoir Dogs' and then to 'Bodies in Rest and Motion' (described in the advance publicity as "a blue collar 'sex, lies and videotape'"). "Jumpin' at the Boneyard' could have been set in England. We have that kind of poverty and those kinds of problems. Those are universal problems. So to come to America to play that kind of American was important to me – not to play the English bad guy in a 'Die Hard' movie.

"We sell this ridiculous version of England to America. It's not for lack of government financing that the film industry is fucked in England. It's to do



with what we let them sell. In the States, you can make a feature film like Nick Gomez's 'Laws of Gravity' for \$38,000. We could do that in Britain, but no, it's Jeremy Irons and Kenneth Branagh".

In Roth's terms, the issue isn't nationality, it's class. What Tarantino, Gomez and Abel Ferrara are doing in the US in the 90s is what Clarke and Stephen Frears and Mike Leigh were doing in Britain in the 80s. But by upping the ante on violence, haven't Ferrara and Gomez pushed the working-class art movie into the kind of exploitation Hollywood finds highly commercial? Roth doesn't see it that way.

"I like violent movies if they're true to the experience of violence. Alan Clarke was the king of that because he made films about real people who were in sad situations. Did you ever see 'Elephant'? The violence is real, it's political. I love violence in movies because it affects me, it hurts me. I love sex in movies, romance. Violence is just part of that. Ferrara's 'King of New York' is part of that. Christopher Walken – the most unpredictable performance. You never knew if he was happy or sad. You can meet these people on the street; it directly relates to the experience of your life. You got inside those people and an accurate script. They probably wouldn't have given him the money to make it if there hadn't been a lot of guns in it, but they also didn't know what they were getting into when they put their money down.

"Why are they getting concerned all of a sudden about violence. The people in Washington, they're the real gang bangers. People get upset about 'Reservoir Dogs' because Quentin shows you that violence has consequences. People have been lulled into advertising violence instead – nicely shot, beautifully lit, thank you very much, this guy dies, and Mel Gibson's already half way down the corridor and you've forgotten about the person who's been killed because he never was real.

"People go away from 'Reservoir

Dogs' thinking they've seen a really violent movie, but they haven't. You see maybe only three specific acts of violence, but it's always impending. It's in the air, in the way they speak and communicate. It's what makes Quentin a great director as opposed to someone who does a violent movie.

"But I'm glad people get upset; it's an upsetting subject. Get used to it. It's going to be around for a long time".

Filmography

Tim Roth

Born 1961, London

Films

A World Apart D: Chris Menges (1987)

The Cook, the Thief, His Wife and Her Lover D: Peter Greenaway (1989)

Vincent et Théo

D: Robert Altman (1990)

Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead D: Tom Stoppard (1990)

Farendj D: Sabine Preczina (1990)

Backsliding D: Simon Target (1991)

Jumpin' at the Boneyard

D: Jeff Stanzler (1991)

Reservoir Dogs

D: Quentin Tarantino (1992)

Bodies in Rest and Motion

(not yet released)

Television

Made in Britain D: Alan Clarke (1983)

Meantime D: Mike Leigh (1983)

A Class of His Own (1984)

The Hit D: Stephen Frears (1984)

Paid to kill the Pope? (TV Eye, 1985)

Agatha Christie's Murder with Mirrors (1985)

King of the Ghetto (series, 1986)

Frankenstein and Dracula

(The South Bank Show, 1987)

Franz Kafka's 'The Trial' (The Modern

World: Ten Great Writers, 1988)

Coppers (1988)

Knuckle/Metamorphosis

(Theatre Night, 1989)

Freeborn Englishman

(Cracking Up, 1989)

Yellowbacks (The Play on One, 1990)

The Common Pursuit

(Screen Two, 1992)

◀ this a film about film, about fiction. "I love violence in the movies", says Tarantino. It's the pomo escape value – for him and for us.

Reservoir Dogs conflates masculinity, violence, and the underclass. Tarantino's version of masculinity is deeply regressive, specifically rooted in the 70s mass culture of his own childhood. When the undercover cop checks his costume in the mirror, he's Robert Blake in *Baretta*. Indeed, what makes *Reservoir Dogs* such a 90s film is that it's about the return of what was repressed in the television version of 70s masculinity – a paranoid, homophobic fear of the other that explodes in hate speech, in kicks and blows, in bullets and blades. *Reservoir Dogs* is an extremely insular film – women get no more than thirty seconds of screen time, people of colour get zero – yet not a minute goes by without a reference to coons and jungle bunnies, to jailhouse rape (black semen shooting up white asses), to the castration threat of "phallic" women like Madonna or that 70s icon Pam Grier. (Its insularity also makes *Reservoir Dogs* less interesting, for all its film-making pyrotechnics, than two other recent 'violent arties': Carl Franklin's *One False Move* and Nick Gomez's *Laws of Gravity*.)

If the unconscious of the film is locked in competition with rap culture, it's also desperate to preserve screen violence as a white male privilege. It's the privilege of white male culture to destroy itself, rather than to be destroyed by the other. Violence is the only privilege these underclass men have. It's what allows them to believe that they're the oppressor and not the oppressed (not female, not black, not homosexual).

The problem in *Reservoir Dogs* is that its critique of masculinity is tied up in its money shots; they're one and the same. Mr Blonde carving up the cop and the final bad-joke shoot-out are guarantees of box-office success. This may have been true of previous films that raised the ante on male violence (*The Wild Bunch*, *Taxi Driver*), but now the field is so littered with corpses that it's hard to make a couple of extra pints of blood seem like a transgression.

What's transgressive in *Reservoir Dogs* is not the level of violence or the terrifying realism of bodies that bleed and bleed, but the way Tarantino lays bare the sado-masochistic dynamic between the film and the spectator. The masochistic (feminised) position of the audience is inscribed in Mr Orange's bleeding body. Mr Orange's pain and Mr White's guilt at not being able to save him bind them together in a sado-masochistic relationship that supersedes Mr White's code of professionalism and leads to his destruction and everyone else's as well. Moreover, the torture scene, far from being gratuitous, as many critics have asserted, is a distillation of the slap/kiss manipulation of the film as a whole. Mr Blonde, dancing around the frozen, fascinated cop (who is literally tied to his seat), changing rhythm mid-step, cracking a joke here, slicing off a bit of flesh there, is a stand-in for the director. And his mocking "Was that as good for you as it was for me?" makes us one with his mutilated victim and leaves no doubt about who's on top.

'Reservoir Dogs' opens on 8 January

ART HOUSE KILLERS

By B. Ruby Rich

● Once upon a time, art movies and independent films were able to corner their share of the market by trading in sex. They delivered on an implicit promise to offer the public more than could be found in mainstream, above-the-waist product. But times have changed. The torch has been passed from sex to violence.

End of an era? The sex tradition goes back to the 60s as the common denominator linking European art cinema with the US and British avant-garde. Think Genet. Jack Smith. Warhol. Look at the post-neo-realism Italians (Fellini, Visconti, Pasolini) or the 60s heyday of British film (*Darling*, *Blow-Up*, *Sunday Bloody Sunday*). Nor am I just talking about the past. In the US alone, if you have any doubts about how long a tradition can last, remember that it was *She's Gotta Have It* that made Spike Lee a player and sex, lies and videotape that turned Steven Soderbergh into a bankable commodity.

But wait: I note this heritage merely to mark its passing. The new order is obvious in this season's film-festival rosters: both the Toronto Festival of Festivals and the London Film Festival greeted autumn with a wave of neo-violence. Critics are now interested in shining their flashlights on the nouveau thugs of murder and fisticuffs, shock and recoil. Caryn James at the *New York Times* noticed the trend at the New York Film Festival: "Wading Through Blood to the Festival's Heart". The Sundance Film Festival is considering a special panel on the subject for January. September's issue of *Movieline* even did a photospread of guns as glamour, with a Smith & Wesson 9-mm DA Luger on the coffee table, a Heckler & Koch 9-mm submachine gun by the bath, and a tag line that insisted: "The word this fall on everyone's lips is firepower, and the accessory on everyone's hips is a piece".

To replace sex, of course, violence has to provide its audience with the same kind of cathartic release. And it seems to be doing just that. Ignore the rhetoric to the contrary: people are getting off. The fix is in, the rush delivered. Otherwise, the films wouldn't work the way they do and the hype wouldn't be as hot.

Thus trends are made, with films enough to justify all the pontification. The first out of the gate came from the US: Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*. The European community's entry is Rémy Belvaux, André Bonzel and Benoit Poelvoorde's *Man Bites Dog*, which made it even into the New York Film Festival. The king of Hong Kong art-shock, John Woo, continues to draw admirers with his newest feature, *Hard Boiled*, even as he shifts gears to US production, directing his first Van Damme movie. Abel Ferrara's *The Bad Lieutenant* augurs a US rating war for Aries with its sex-violence combo. In the queer contingent, too, sex and violence cohabit and copulate (Gregg Araki's *The Living End*, for instance, or Tom Kalin's *Swoon*). There's even a league of their own for the girls: the London Film Festival has shown both Tamra Davis' *Guncrazy* and Stacy Cochran's *My New Gun*.

The films are pretty different from one another. *Reservoir Dogs*, for instance, signs on to Scorsese territory, starring Harvey Keitel himself as the goodest fella in a gang of heisters who range from professional to undercover to

psycho in their behaviour – but are all unmistakably cinematic, their characters drawn from B-movie history. They stage a robbery, they get betrayed, loyalty gets a workout, and a lot of people get killed. It's violence as a language of communication. Nobody is likely to confuse movies with real life after seeing it, despite a publicity campaign that seems to want to sell us on authenticity. Maybe that's what makes a film more moral, less attackable.

Giving the lie to the real-life argument, though, Tarantino's next of kin aesthetically is John Woo. While it's easy to imagine someone thinking they'd found an insight into Hong Kong after seeing *Hard Boiled* (especially since the Triad shoot-out at the last Hong Kong festival), it's hard to imagine that anyone could argue that its violence is naturalistic, realistic or believable. More likely, the violence brings to mind Peckinpah crossed with Kurosawa, choreography drawn with blows rather than plies, lines etched into celluloid with blood instead of ink. It's Hong Kong movie tradition, at its best. Again, the themes are loyalty and betrayal, cops and robbers, the humanist versus the psycho. Just to prove where its heart is, the climactic scene is staged in a hospital – but the babies are saved.

Film-school revenge

The Bad Lieutenant and *Man Bites Dog* are something else. Nobody is likely to be saved, nobody takes prisoners. Real life enters the movie theatre the second such films come on screen, and audiences have been known to vote with their feet. *The Bad Lieutenant* is Ferrara's characteristic sex, sleaze and violence cocktail; the pitch is Scorsese but the mood feels more Polanski. The rhetoric accompanying *Man Bites Dog* is more fashionable, claiming that the snuff-film violence with which it slams its viewers is really a critique of violence in the media, a send-up of *verité*, and a satirisation of television's true-crime genre. Yeah, right. The film-makers themselves play the key roles in a fake documentary of a film crew following a serial killer, filming everything and identifying with its subject even as his acts grow increasingly heinous. Rape and racism are just two of the cards played in the high-stakes game.

The film-makers pitch a catalytic moment, insisting their audience switches from laughter to horror. But it doesn't work. The audience divided instead: some of us never started to laugh; some of them never stopped. In one post-film ramble, the film-makers admitted they made the film on the verge of being kicked out of film school. Think of it as the ultimate film-school revenge film: you thought I was bad, well take this. Yet another fuck-you movie in which we all must pay for somebody else's sins. Ferrara pitches his vision as a quest for redemption, reasoning perhaps that if a nun can forgive the crackheads who rape her with a crucifix, then an audience should be able to forgive Ferrara, right?

Wrong. And the women, so badly served by this genre as characters, what do they do behind the camera? Surprise, surprise, something rather different is happening in this post-*Thelma & Louise* moment. Not the male ►



Gun power: John Woo's 'Hard Boiled', a mix of Peckinpah and Kurosawa, top; Tamra Davis' 'Guncrazy', in which weaponry equals empowerment, above



◀ bonding of *Reservoir Dogs*, not the emotionless violence of *Hard Boiled*, not the sadism of *The Bad Lieutenant* nor the misanthropy of *Man Bites Dog*. No, even though the old genre movies allowed no place for women (pre-Kathryn Bigelow, anyway), the Ridley Scott caper changed the rules. As a result, guns represent something very specific in *Guncrazy* and *My New Gun*: empowerment.

The common denominator of the two movies is mistreated women, the arrival of a gun (welcome or not), and James LeGros as the unlikely object of desire in a stylish man-woman-gun triangle. In *Guncrazy*, Drew Barrymore (who's never been better) is stuck in a trailer in a small town performing as high-school slut by day, stepdaddy's plaything by night, trapped forever in hell until her pen-pal correspondence with a convict ends up changing her life. Terminally, but what the hell.

Director Davis explained, between screenings at Toronto, that she'd modelled the film less on its Joseph H. Lewis namesake than on *Badlands*, *Bonnie & Clyde* and Warhol features (the stepdaddy is none other than Joe Dallesandro). Davis manages to open up the violence/sex equation and redefine the terms. What's the real violence in backwater towns: rapes or the murder of rapists? What's the real crime: religion or running away? It's hard to see the other movies as anything but film-school tricks or little-boy antics after an evening with *Guncrazy*.

Cochran's *My New Gun*, on the other hand, is an evening off: this is the story of a woman who doesn't want a gun at all. Is she rejecting the object or its acts, her potential or her marriage (it's hubby who brings her the gun)? Heavily Seidelman-influenced, Cochran spins red herrings into cotton candy and ends up with an anti-yuppie comedy in which violence turns out to represent boredom, bad manners or lack of imagination. Davis sees the two films as a

paradigm of West Coast versus East Coast: "In her film, the woman never gets to use the gun; in mine, her using it is the whole point".

But what's the point of any of the boy-boy movies, after all? It's tempting to see the neo-violence phenomenon as a purely cinematic episode. The *New Yorker's* Terrence Rafferty describes Tarantino as tapping into a movie tradition of "exploding-bullet power". John Woo has been around for quite a while, as has the Hong Kong genre that birthed his reinterpretations. And besides, it was the new African-American guys who transformed South Central from a neighbourhood into a genre, and made the studios a bundle doing it. Is this just a continuation, then, with independents and Europeans jumping on the bone?

Not quite. It's no coincidence that these films are appearing at the very moment in which the Cold War has been decentralised, split like atoms into dozens of hot wars around the globe. The newspapers are full of the violence in "ex-Yugoslavia", as they like to call it. The end of Soviet has spelled the end of Union too, as balkanisation, ethnic hostilities, tribal wars, anti-semitism, gypsy-hatred all take centre stage. Massacres erupt again in South Africa. In the months between the Toronto and London festivals, the Nobel Peace Prize went to Rigoberta Menchu and, implicitly, spoke against Guatemala's contemporary manifestations of colonial violence. Meanwhile, IRA bombs are exploding once again in London. And the genre status of South Central didn't immunise it from the Rodney King verdict or the LA rebellions that followed.

The 90s, in short, is a time of intensely politicised violence. It should not be surprising, then, that the film genre that has emerged is one of equally intense violence, but depoliticised and individualised, in keeping with so much movie tradition. In the old days of com-

Violent times: Belvaux, Bonzel and Poelvoorde's 'Man Bites Dog', where the actions of a serial killer are followed by a documentary crew – a film about filming violence

munism, it used to be said that capitalism thrived by using 'crime' to direct public attention towards lone villains and away from the criminal functioning of the free market. Today, the genre of neo-violence seems tailor-made to fit that analysis. The world has changed too fast. The level of conflict and violence is beyond comprehension. Confused and angry and full of rage (to borrow my favourite Culture Clash phrase)? Go back to genre, back to the movies.

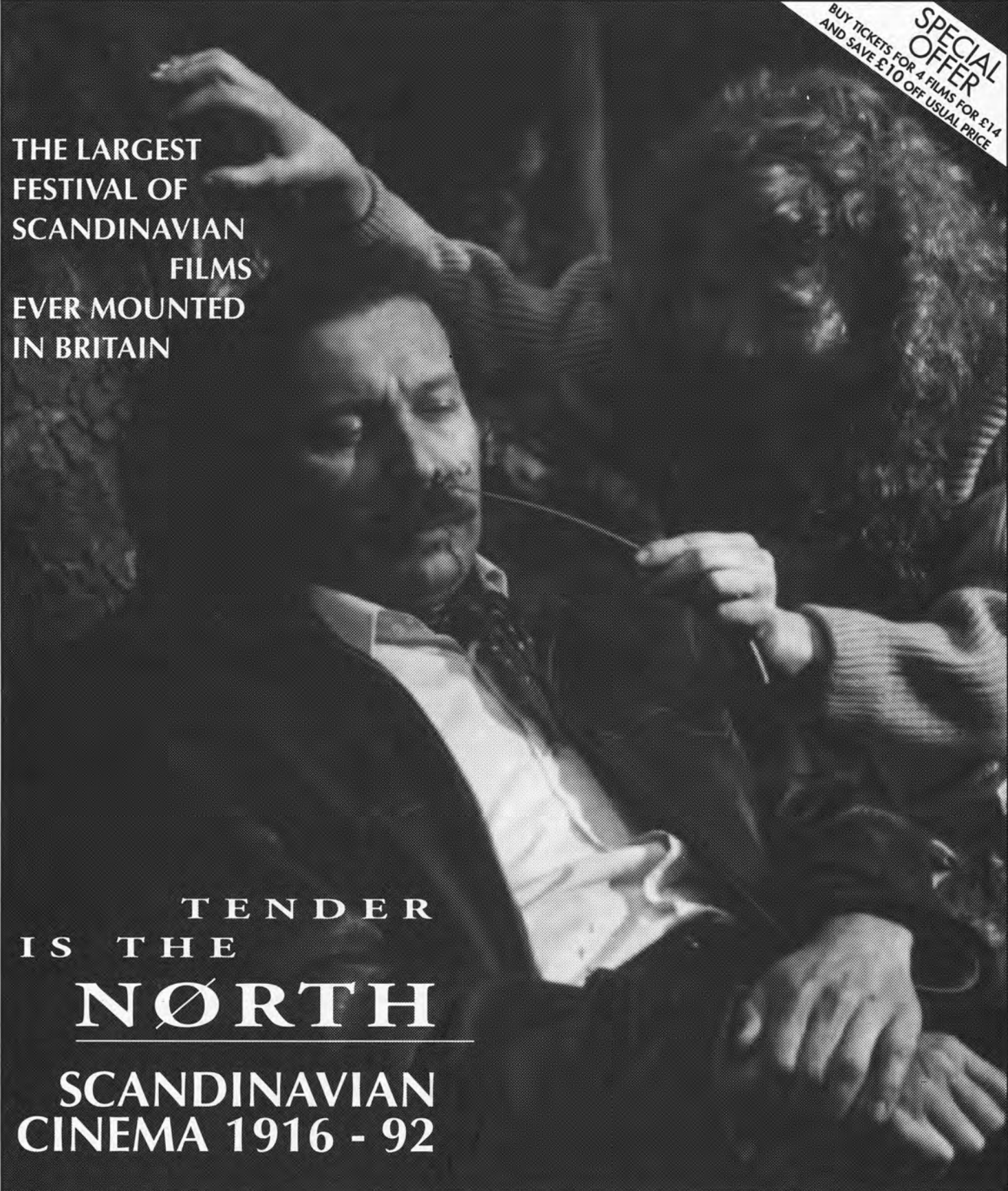
Dubious pleasures

Movies may be expected to reflect their realities, but more often they function as opposites or surrogates. This year, movie-going publics may well feel powerless in the face of overwhelming global forces of poverty, ideological impoverishment and hatred of self and others. Too angry and up-tight for the old sexual fix. How much better to sign on to violence and see that rage explode on screen – but comfortably restrained within the cosy familiarity of genre. Like children entranced by the murders, explosions and reincarnations of the cartoon characters they love, audiences today are prepared to cede their agency to the larger-than-life characters of celluloid.

So I skipped the dinner, in Toronto, at which Quentin Tarantino and John Woo fell in love – with each other's movies. A few days later, a press release in my mailbox announced that Tarantino would write the screenplay for Woo's next opus (after his Van Damme production). By that time, I'd seen Tilda Swinton in Sally Potter's *Orlando*, one of the many films this year with a focus other than violence. Orlando's mythic transformation from man to woman occurs at the exact moment in which he is required to enter into battle and kill: he falls into a weeks-long slumber, from which Lady Orlando awakens. Alas, in the 90s, even gender is not necessarily a refuge. Tamra Davis turns out to have just finished shooting *Cell Block 4*, Hollywood's upcoming mega-violence boyz in the hood movie, written and produced by Nelson George, Chris Rock and Bob Locash. The neo-violence of the art houses, meanwhile, seems set to take charge of 1993.

I admit that I enjoy some of these movies for the euphoric rush of their dubious pleasures, while I confess to despising others for the misogyny, race-baiting and downright misanthropy that drive their characters and narratives. Which is the 'politically correct' response? Do I think that movies like these create violence? Probably not. On the other hand, in the current moment, is violence really what I want to experience – witness and participate in – when I enter the movie theatre? Probably not. I guess I just hope that the other films now being made and shown can get a fair viewing in a context that sees the self-consciousness of neo-violence as the ultimate hip. I hope genres can still be replaced rather than just replayed. If not, I may have to sink into a coma, like Orlando, and wait for the war to end.

'Man Bites Dog' opens on 15 January; *The Bad Lieutenant* and *The Living End* in February



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By Philip Strick

● Accidentally rediscovered, so the story goes, when the wrong print was sent from the Warner archives to a Beverly Hills cinema, the original 'director's cut' of *Blade Runner* went on to break the house record during a special San Francisco re-run in October 1991. Audiences were reported to be delighted by the film's soundtrack, no longer cluttered with an intrusive voiceover, and by the 'symphonic strings' which were said to have replaced the 'jarring' compositions of Vangelis. Encouraged by such enthusiasm, Warner Bros announced an international relaunch of the film. This was to be the director's re-cut of his own version and would incorporate a dream sequence and a new, bleaker ending.

The promise of a revitalised *Blade Runner*, fuelled by rumours of extra footage, has prepared the way for a gala show at the London Film Festival and nationwide exposure to follow. What is to be revealed at these screenings, however, unless the Warner vaults contain further variants not yet shown to the press, is a distinctly and splendidly familiar, if slightly abbreviated *Blade Runner*. The only obvious differences from the form in which we have known it for the past decade are that it has been shorn of its narration, cropped of its ending, and enhanced by the glimpse of a unicorn. Happily, the Vangelis score remains intact.

Arguments over which version we should prefer of such phenomena as *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Fatal Attraction*, *Aliens*, or *Hear My Song*, are mischievously nurtured by the video market, which has everything to gain from selling a title several times over. Certainly the claim that a film should be seen as its director intended offers a reasonably reliable principle, but it makes no allowance for the possibility that the director might have had second thoughts or not enough thoughts in the first place, or was several directors plus a producer, or has simply been misreported. In practice, it seems sensible to judge each version of a work in isolation, disregarding what it was 'supposed' to be: the only useful criterion is whether it functions efficiently in its existing form. But things aren't so easy. The knowledge of alternative footage creates distractions, affecting our response to what we see. How is it possible, having once watched Cameron's deleted episode of a space-colonist family under attack, to recall *Aliens* without it? How do we now judge *Pat Garrett &*



Sean Young as Rachael

Billy the Kid in any version which omits the grim introduction – added years later – in which Garrett is ambushed? Or *Andrei Rublev*, without the recently restored balloon sequence?

Adding to the confusion, the press kit for *Blade Runner* describes the original ending to the film (now deleted) as the "chase-and-escape" version, a poor label for the sequence as filmed and edited, with its soaring aerial shots, untroubled landscapes, and promise of at least temporary release. Surely the whole point of that ending was that the lovers would not be hunted down, that they were gambling on a reasonable lifespan of hard-won contentment far beyond city limits? The idea of the 'chase', in fact, came from the shooting script – in its penultimate form – in which the rival blade runner Gaff (Edward James Olmos) was to be shown hot on the heels of the fleeing couple. It never happened, and now the panoramic aerial shots, a startling burst of space and sunlight and relief, don't happen either. "I was never quite comfortable with that", explains Scott. So in the 'director's cut', the two exiles leave their apartment and retreat into an abrupt darkness, their prospects cruelly curtailed. Ringing in their ears and ours is an unwelcome repeat of Gaff's parting shot: "It's too bad she won't live – but then again, who does?"

The curious effect of this premature conclusion is not only that it leaves us to make our own guesses, but also that it gives Gaff the last word, along with almost the final image, the tiny tinfoil unicorn. Previously dismissed (by way of the commentary) as a signal that the

snooping cop has generously allowed his prey to survive, this discarded scrap suddenly acquires a heightened significance, given the film's other main interpolation, a 'living' unicorn. Arriving as Deckard dreams listlessly by his piano just before analysing one of the replicant snapshots, the unexplained (and unscripted) image of a unicorn galloping through misty woodland has no obvious link with anything. The shot was lifted from *Legend* (Scott's next film after *Blade Runner*), whose opening titles explain that "light is harboured in the souls of unicorns... They can only be found by the purest of mortals". In the *Blade Runner* context, its main implication is that Deckard, who has hitherto shown little inclination towards the poetic, is again drinking too hard or has taken leave of his senses.

More kindly interpreted, the vision might hint at a quest of which Deckard is only faintly aware – the hunt for a fabled beast that might be the replicant superbeing, might be himself, or might be his own elusive past, pictured in fragmentary poses across the piano top. As the moment passes, we can only leave it there, particularly as the process of exploring the discovered photograph for clues remains the most fascinating piece of cinematic detection since *Blow-Up*. But with the linking of the unicorn to Gaff, several new implications are on offer. Is the surviving replicant, Rachael, now the love of Deckard's life, being likened to the unicorn, and, in keeping with this emblematic symbol, being doomed to regal extinction? The shooting script describes the tinfoil figure as "Gaff's gauntlet", but while it could indeed be the sort of challenge to which Scott's duellists would briskly respond, it hints more of collusion than of malice – and collusion of a notably perceptive kind.

How would Gaff be aware that Deckard has, in his time (and ours), dreamed of unicorns? It could, of course, be mere coincidence. Gaff's other sculpted contributions to the case have been a paper-tissue chicken and a well-endowed matchstick man, and if these, too, are supposed to be symbolic (other than, at best, not inappropriate), we would have inexhaustible material for unhelpful speculation. What they do establish, incontrovertibly, is that Gaff is a model-maker like Chew (who makes eyeballs), Sebastian (who makes animated dolls) and Tyrell (who makes androids). A seedy but ambitious puppet-master, angling for promotion, Gaff haunts the edges of Deckard's life as if

BLADE RUNNER TELLING THE DIFFERENCE

Does the director's cut show that Deckard is a replicant?

secretly in control of it. Played by Olmos in Satanic beard and uneasy contact lenses, he makes a chilly attendant who, like the android medical officer in Scott's *Alien*, knows and manipulates more than he will admit to.

What might be guessed from Gaff's presence, imagination running wild, is that he has Deckard's real identity at heart, that he knows Deckard's programming, and that Deckard, of course, is also a replicant. Admirers of Philip K. Dick, the science-fiction writer whose novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* is closer to *Blade Runner* in spirit than his fans would generally like to acknowledge (the interrogation of Rachael, for example, has been transferred almost intact), cheerfully support this theory on the basis of Dick's conviction that most people are replicants and consequently unreliable, dangerous, and pathetic. In their book, maybe even Gaff is a replicant – and why not? But in the affair of Deckard, the film offers more substantial clues, partly by accident and partly by design – and these have been subtly enhanced by the 'director's cut', unicorn and all.

The accident, which remains uncorrected in the film's new version and is becoming known as 'Ridley's deliberate mistake', throws into question exactly how many Nexus-6 replicants are at large in the streets of Los Angeles in 2019. Summoned to the office of his former boss Bryant (M. Emmet Walsh), the 'retired' blade runner (i.e. specialist in identifying and destroying illegal androids) is informed that, like it or not, he is back in service. Four replicants have arrived in the city – Pris, Zhora, Leon, and their leader Roy Batty (Rutger Hauer) – and Deckard has to deal with them. Minutes later, Bryant describes how six replicants ("three male, three female") hi-jacked a space shuttle back to Earth, and one of these has since been killed during a break-in at the Tyrell Corporation headquarters. Which leaves five.

A look at the shooting script reveals that almost to the last moment of casting, the replicant team was to include another female, Mary. A sad, petulant figure decaying fast in the final stages of her four-year lifespan, she dies in Sebastian's apartment shortly before Deckard arrives for his battles with Pris and Roy. Raging at her fate, she has some splendid lines: "I hate this place – streets full of little people scurrying and wiggling. We weren't made for this... We were made to be injured or wounded or slaughtered. We were meant to be torn apart by C-Beam-hits or burned up in Hydrogen fires".

Of the group, it was to be Mary who gave the clearest picture of android existence, part slave, part conquistador, alongside Roy's melancholy boast: "We've seen things you people wouldn't believe". But Mary, too, never happened.

Instead, her ghost haunts *Blade Runner* in the shape of one replicant unaccounted for. And if we are to confine our reading of the film strictly to the information it provides, the 'missing' replicant conveniently suggests a hidden identity for Deckard, who, disconsolate and solitary, his family ties represented merely by an unreliable jumble of photographs, might indeed have only recently fallen to Earth. In casual confirmation, a glimpse of him beside Rachael, whose eyes shine with a metallic android gleam, shows his eyes, too, as reflective surfaces. Or is this just another minor error (like the incorrect serial number, the stuntperson in a wig, the unsynchronised interrogation of the snake-maker)? Nonsense, surely, that Deckard could be anything but human, with his long-established reputation as a blade runner and his obvious lack of the superhuman strength shown by his opponents? But the point is made that the replicants rely desperately on photographs to reinforce their 'memories', while Scott matches Deckard visually with both Leon (they are intercut in identical positions after Zhora's death) and Roy (they pause at the same time to repair their hands during the final confrontation). And with the disappearance of the commentary, Deckard is no longer able to talk his way out of suspicion.

Added as an afterthought following preview



Harrison Ford as Deckard

tests of *Blade Runner* in 1982, the commentary has always proved a controversial device. "Both Harrison Ford and I objected to it", says Scott, "but it seemed to be required by the audience, so we put it in". With its world-weary, dismissive tone, the narration has few defenders. The first reaction to the 'director's cut', however, by anyone already familiar with the film, is to replace the missing phrases from memory. More Spillane than Chandler, they conveyed – as in the hardboiled thrillers they dully echoed – a jaded reassurance in their use of the past tense, as if this vividly predestined future had already been assimilated into the past. Now that many of *Blade Runner's* images are confirmed as very much a matter of the present, revisited by Scott himself for *Someone to Watch Over Me* and *Black Rain*, the words are fully superannuated. And yet they cling in our memory, whispers too strong to be ignored. "All he wanted", Deckard was once heard to say, "were the same answers everybody else wanted. Where do I come from? Where am I going? How long have I got?" It was ungraciously delivered, but it certainly focused the attention.

Without his assurances in our ears, Deckard loses a definition; no longer in control of events, he experiences them at *our* speed. He becomes an ambiguous, uncertain stumbler, as vulnerable and desperate, as much a face in the crowd, as the (other?) androids. Since the narration told us little that is not covered by the opening title and then clarified by all subsequent dialogue, its deletion exposes its special weakness – that it expained nothing at all. For at least half the plot, in which Deckard has no part to play, it had no relevance. Without such distraction, the real strength of the film is that its images do the explaining. And while we may in hindsight be tempted to 'read' *Blade Runner* as a paraphrase by screenwriter David Peoples of his script for *Unforgiven* (veteran manhunter, bullied from retirement, shoots down undeserving fugitives), those images remain beyond words, a triumphant vindication of Scott's technique. They contain, too, the arguments that continue to perplex him – questions of seniority, of symmetry, of the ageing process, and of a compulsive struggle between darkness and light. "What is light without dark?", cries his spectacular adversary in *Legend*, speaking from unicorn country for all replicants everywhere. "I am a part of you all! You can never defeat me. We are brothers eternal".

'Blade Runner' opens on 27 November

By Tony Rayns

● *Farewell to My Concubine* (Ba Wang Bie Ji) is one of the most famous Peking Operas, a piece popularised (and taken to the US in 1930) by the great opera actor Meilan Fang, who specialised in female roles. The opera, set in 202BC, shows the last days of the King of Chu as he faces defeat in battle at the hands of the King of Han. The doomed hero is accompanied by his adoring concubine, who urges him to flee to safety and finally impales herself on his sword to relieve him of the burden of saving her. The role of the concubine (in opera terms, a *huadan* or sexually active woman) was traditionally played by a female impersonator.

The prolific Hong Kong writer Lilian Lee (Lee Bik-Wah) used the same title for a novel she published some twelve years ago. The book spans many decades of China's fraught modern history – from the early years of the Republic to the aftermath of the

Cultural Revolution – while charting the tight emotional bond between two male opera actors. The relationship begins in the Spartan surroundings of a Peking Opera Academy in the 20s, where the butch young Duan Xiaolou becomes the protector of the effeminate young Cheng Dieyi. In adult life, these two become a well-known stage team, noted particularly for playing king and concubine in *Farewell to My Concubine*. Their quasi-marital relationship comes under assorted strains during the years of war, civil war and Communist government, and finally snaps during the Cultural Revolution, when each denounces the other in an attempt to save his own skin. The novel ends with a forlorn reunion in a gay bath-house in Hong Kong in the late 70s.

Lee's book was adapted as a two-part television movie in Hong Kong soon after it was published (I wrote about that version, directed by Alex Law, in *S&S*, Winter 1984/85), but no one was anxious to buy the film rights

to such 'sensitive' material until the late 80s, when they were picked up by the Taiwan producer Hsu Feng (Xu Feng). Ms Hsu is best known as the lead actress in King Hu's finest films: *A Touch of Zen* (Xia Nü, 1969), *The Valiant Ones* (Zhonglie Tu, 1974) and *Raining in the Mountains* (Kong Shan Ling Yu, 1979). She invited Chen Kaige to direct an adaptation of the book for her company, Tomson, at the 1988 Cannes festival. Worried by the novel's "superficiality", Chen waited nearly two years before he signed to make the film. In fashioning their screenplay, he and writer Lu Wei made so many changes that Lee went back to revise her novel; she has already published a new version, based on the screenplay.

Chen shot the film in Beijing last summer, despite some pressure on Hsu from the Chinese authorities to replace him with another director. He is currently in Tokyo for the post-production, and expects to premiere the film in Hong Kong in January. The film marks a break with the refined,

aesthetic approach Chen brought to his first four features; this is a big-budget period spectacle, with big-name stars in the three leading roles. The female impersonator, Cheng, is played by Hong Kong idol Leslie Cheung, internationally known for his roles in, among others, Stanley Kwan's *Rouge* (Yanzhi Kou, 1987), Ching Siu-Tung's *A Chinese Ghost Story* (Qiannü Youhun, 1987) and Wong Kar-Wai's *Days of Being Wild* (A Fei Zhengchuan, 1990). The 'husband' Duan is played by Mainland star Zhang Fengyi, cast as a male sex-object by directors as diverse as Ling Zifeng (*Rickshaw Boy*/Luotou Xiangzi, 1982) and Zhou Xiaowen (*No Regrets for Youth*/Qingchun Wu Hui, 1992), but better known, in his own words, for playing "Communist role models". And Juxian, the prostitute who comes between them, is played by Zhang Yimou's constant muse, Gong Li.

I was in Beijing this summer, both to watch Chen Kaige at work and to see other films and works-in-progress. This is a partial diary of the visit.

NIGHTS AT THE OPERA

Sunday

The first person I see on arrival at the location – a former brothel, now the no-star Dazhong Guesthouse, in an alley behind Qianmen – is a man in drag. Great make-up, not so sure about the red paper chrysanthemum in his hair. But he turns out to be Gong Li's stunt double, a non-professional who has gamely volunteered to enact Juxian's suicidal plunge from the brothel's second-storey balcony to the courtyard below. The ex-brothel itself looks remarkably like the 'flower-house' in *Rouge* (as it happens, also adapted from a Lilian Lee novel by a director who didn't much care for the book), and only a minimum of set-dressing has been needed to take it back to its former identity. The scene calls for Duan, visiting the brothel as a customer, to catch Juxian in his arms before she hits the flagstones. Gong Li didn't enjoy shooting the close-up, which required her to fall into frame from an off-screen platform, although the sturdy Zhang Fengyi caught her without mishap. The stuntman has a much tougher job: a 25-foot drop down to a stack of cardboard boxes covered by three unsecured, moth-eaten mattresses. Gong hovers in the background to watch the first take and then slips away, unable to watch.

Take 1 looks great, except that the stuntman – worried that his black silk *cheongsam* might balloon up like a parachute – comes down arse-first. The position of his body won't match the close-up, so he has to do it again. He comes

down straight as an arrow the second time, but the angle is much too wide and he very nearly misses the stack of boxes altogether. Everyone on set rushes forward to help him up; miraculously, he's still in one piece. Take 3 is the one, but the boxes are so crumpled by this time that he disappears into a crater in the middle of the stack, taking one of the mattresses with him. As soon as it's clear he has survived, a huge round of applause breaks out.

This is one of the most relaxed and good-humoured shoots I've visited. No one on set is old enough to remember the time when brothels flourished in Beijing, but the location's history gives everyone a certain *frisson* and licenses a stream of mildly louche jokes. Several members of the crew have donned hats and 30s threads to play brothel customers, and they've been joined by Huang Lei, who played the young blind musician at the centre of Chen's *Life on a String* (1991), but now looks more like the Leslie Cheung character in *Rouge*. (Huang tells me he's now on the acting course at Beijing Film Academy; they turned him down when he first applied, but had second thoughts when he was cast in a Chen Kaige film.) The only thing that slightly muffles the party atmosphere is the poisonous cloud of sulphurous smoke that director of photography Gu Changwei insists on pumping across the yard before each take. But even that cannot stifle the jokes. When someone recalls aloud that the inaugural meeting of the Chinese

Communist Party took place in a Shanghai brothel, the entire unit cracks up, and no one laughs louder than Chen Kaige himself.

Tuesday

The hard-line Maoists in the Ministry for Radio, Film and Television may consider themselves the sternest critics of Fifth Generation filmmakers like Chen Kaige and Zhang Yimou, but they should try eavesdropping on Sixth Generation conversations about Chinese cinema. Older people in China are by no means convinced that a Sixth Generation exists yet (this very question came up earlier today when I lunched with Zhang Yimou), but the kids themselves have no doubt that they're different. The students who graduated from Beijing Film Academy in 1989 were all in their mid-twenties, a good fifteen years younger than any of the Fifth Generation directors, and one of the ways they asserted their identity was by expressing scorn for the movies made by their immediate predecessors. They view Fifth Generation cinema much as young *New Musical Express* writers hear the music of Yes or Genesis: ponderous, vacantly portentous and divorced from everything that matters to them. They're particularly impatient with what they see as the endless harping on issues raised by Mao's Cultural Revolution.

Last night, though, when I visited the ►
'Farewell to My Concubine': Leslie Cheung (left) and Zhang Fengyi, on stage as the concubine and the King of Chu



◀ shoot of Zhang Yuan's *Beijing Bastards* (Zazhong), the one thing everyone asked about was Chen Kaige's shoot. The ostensible focus of interest was Leslie Cheung's role, but I sensed a strong underlying curiosity about the change of direction in Chen's career. Like the groundbreaking *Mama* (1991), Zhang Yuan's new film is a genuinely independent production; the money comes from private investors in Beijing and Hong Kong, with a top-up from the Hubert Bals Fund in Rotterdam. The film centres on China's only world-class rock star, Cui Jian (for whom Zhang has already made three excellent music videos), and last night's shoot in a large recording studio near Xijiekou was of Cui and his band performing one of the tracks written for the project. The song sounded great, but no one could tell me how the music sequences would relate to the fiction sequences – or, indeed, confirm that fiction sequences would make it through to the final cut.

Zhang Yuan was an '89 graduate from the BFA's cinematography course, and only one of his classmates from the directing course has so far made a feature: a young man named Hu Xueyang, whose good personal connections somehow persuaded the ultra-conservative Shanghai Film Studio to let him direct *A Waiting Woman* (Liushou Nüshi). I saw this the other day, and almost walked out; it's a would-be glossy melodrama set in a fantasy world of luxury apartments, chic coffee shops, effortless international phonecalls and readily available taxis. It sets out to deal with the 'new social problem' of young women whose husbands are sent overseas to work or study, but ends up expressing nothing but a blind longing to emigrate. Hardly cutting-edge stuff, this, and so Zhang Yuan's *Mama* and the Cui Jian music videos have to stand alone for the moment as harbingers of Sixth Generation cinema.

As Zhang Yuan and his colleagues perhaps guessed, though, the Fifth Generation is now less a monolithic 'enemy' than a moving target. Zhang Yimou spelled it out over lunch: "All of us in my generation have to change, just as everything around us is changing. We can't go on making the same kind of films".

Wednesday

Approaching the sound stage in Beijing Film Studio, I have to wade through a knot of Leslie Cheung fans (mostly teenage boys) who have somehow got past the paramilitary guard on the studio gate and are hanging around hoping for autographs. (When Leslie obliges them, they're baffled to discover that he signs in English.) Press on inside, and it really is like entering another world. The vast set recreates the interior of an old opera house as it might have survived into the 30s: a cavernous space with a low-rise stage at one end and a balcony around the other three sides, thick with fumes and filled with the hubbub of more than 500 costumed extras. Elite patrons are seated in the balcony, where cooling towels are tossed up to them by theatre attendants. The groundlings are seated on long benches at tables, with tea, snack and cigarette vendors moving among them. There are caged songbirds everywhere. On the stage, a third-rate opera troupe starts

performing a martial scene from the Peking Opera *The Great Battle at Nine-Li Mountain*: lavishly costumed generals (each of them representing a platoon of soldiers) mime combat to a loud, percussive score.

This afternoon Chen Kaige is filming a scene that comes relatively early in the film, when the protagonists are still children. Cheng and another boy have run away from the cruel regimen of the Opera Academy and sneaked into the theatre for their first glimpse of a real opera performance; they are so entranced by what they see that they return to the academy, ready to take their master's punishment for running away. Real life is apparently shadowing this fiction rather closely. Zhang Fengyi tells me what Leslie Cheung whispered to him during an especially arduous retake of one of their scenes on the opera stage: "We must suffer through this, because we'll be rewarded eventually". In fact, virtually everyone in the cast and crew seems confident that they're working on something that will be recognised as an important movie, maybe even a great one.

Here, as on the location for the brothel scene, Gu Changwei will not shoot a take until a satisfactory pall of smoke has settled in the atmosphere, no matter what the cost to everyone's lungs. As soon as the chance arises, I ask him about this. "The smoke", he explains, "is an integral visual element throughout this film. Personally, I like the way it softens light, makes it gentler. I also like the way it 'dramatises' atmosphere; a ray of light through smoke is different from an ordinary ray of light. Chen Kaige and I decided on using a lot of smoke when we realised that so much of the film would be shot in interiors; the smoke complements the design work, it helps to authenticate the period feeling. After all, places of entertainment in the 20s and 30s were smoky and poorly ventilated. Beyond that, we're sometimes using smoke for its symbolic value – as in the prison scenes, where it suggests impending death. And finally, it intensifies the film's overall sense of life as a dream. Kaige's father [retired director Chen Huaikai] pointed out to us how much this film has to do with fantasy".

Saturday

People will tell you that the Fifth Generation directors are all but unknown to the audience in China, but the youngish masseur I've come to this afternoon starts rattling off the names Chen Kaige, Zhang Yimou, Tian Zhuangzhuang and Wu Ziniu as soon as he learns that I'm in town on movie business, without prompting from me. And when he finds out that I'm here specifically to visit Chen's shoot, he starts repeating everything he's heard about the film, with only the slightest embarrassment when it comes to the strong gay element. Personally, he can't wait to see it.

I'm reminded of the time, about five years ago, when I led a class in Shanghai Film Studio on *My Beautiful Laundrette* and found myself being asked whether it was better to drown or electrocute homosexuals. Like the world's other surviving Communist parties, the CCP has done its best, since it came to power in 1949, to exterminate homosexuality. Judging

by my experience in Shanghai, in pre-war days the country's gay capital, it has had a surprising degree of success. As in many other areas of Chinese society, though, things have loosened up somewhat in recent years. There were a few openly gay discos in Guangzhou until some idiot journalist in Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* wrote about them, prompting the authorities to close them down. A number of discos and clubs in Beijing have also been shuttered for permitting unspecified "immoral activities", but a foreign resident of the city tells me that street-cruising is ubiquitous and has reached what he calls "awesome levels".

So how does *Farewell to My Concubine* relate to this climate of persecution and paranoia? When you ask Hsu Feng in her office in Hong Kong why she bought the rights to the book, the first thing she says is: "I didn't understand homosexuality until I read it, and I found that especially interesting". Working in Beijing, Chen Kaige is understandably more reticent: "It's not really about homosexuality at all. It's easy to understand why the two boys become so close: they live and train together, eat the same food, sleep in the same bed. The younger boy takes opera characters like the concubine as his role models, but he has no idea about sex".

Necessary evasions aside, it's clear that the film will breach a long-standing taboo in China. Why, then, did the authorities approve the project in the first place? Did they not realise that the theme (crystallised in the casting of Leslie Cheung as a female impersonator) will be a major point of commercial appeal when the film is released around the world? One reason they gave it the go-ahead is that Hsu Feng and her husband are important figures in Mainland-Taiwan trade, too important to be quarrelled with. But I think it was ultimately the Peking Opera setting that helped China's government censors to turn a blind eye to the story's 'perversity'. Zhang Fengyi gave me a very matter-of-fact perspective on this: "Ordinary Chinese people know all about homosexual relationships in opera circles. It's considered abnormal, but not exceptional. The authorities may disapprove, but ordinary people like the stories and have no trouble accepting what it takes to tell them". This rings true, and it reminds me that the last Mainland Chinese film with explicit gay content also had a Peking Opera background: Ma-Xu Weibang's *Autumn Begonia* (Qiu Haitang, 1943).

Sunday

Breakfast with Chen Kaige and his right-hand man, Charles Teng. Chen is tired but relaxed, and in a usefully talkative mood.

"Casting Gong Li and Zhang Fengyi was my idea. The character of Juxian is just a shadow in the novel, so we had to expand the part considerably before we could seriously approach Gong Li to play it. Hsu Feng was dubious about accepting Zhang Fengyi until she met him and saw him in other films. On the other hand, Leslie was Hsu Feng's suggestion. I didn't know him at all until she introduced us. The character Cheng is a man different from most others, and his sadness makes him all the more beautiful. No one could have played him better than



Tian Zhuangzhuang's *The Blue Kite* (Lan Fengzheng) is his most ambitious and serious-minded film since *Horse Thief* – and certainly his best. It spans the first eighteen years of Communist rule, but centres on the life of a woman primary-school teacher in a suburb of Beijing who loses one husband after another to the political vicissitudes of the times. Her first husband, the father of her son (who narrates the film), is branded a rightist in 1957 and despatched to a labour camp. Her second is the man who unthinkingly got her first husband into trouble; he marries her out of guilt, she accepts

him out of tenderness, but he dies of ill-health in the near-famine that follows Mao's ruinous Great Leap Forward campaign. Her third choice is a Party official...

Tian recreates the texture and details of life in the 50s and 60s with great precision, and draws piercingly naturalistic performances from his cast. The film currently awaits censorship approval from the authorities before Tian proceeds to post-production in Tokyo. The recent return to a political climate of reformism ought to mean that it passes intact. (TR)



Zhang Yimou's *The Story of Qiu Ju* (Qiu Ju Da Guansi) centres on a Gong Li performance as squarely as *Raise the Red Lantern* did, but the resemblance ends there. Qiu Ju is a peasant wife in a moderately prosperous Shanxi village, furious that the village chief won't apologise for kicking her husband in the groin during an argument. She decides to put China's legal system to the test, and takes the matter from the village tribunal to the city police and finally to the provincial court. The fact that she meets nothing but kind, courteous and helpful

officials looks dismayingly like a sop to the powers-that-be who banned Zhang's last two films, but as a venture into a radically new style of film-making, this is an undoubted triumph. Zhang, a skeleton crew and four professional actors spent eight months living in the village to enable them to blend in as fully as possible with the local people; even then, fully half the film was shot with hidden cameras and radio mikes to heighten the sense of raw, undirected social reality. Gong Li is astonishingly credible as the peasant heroine. (TR)

Leslie: he looks and moves like someone from another planet. I'm enjoying working with stars, but who knows? Maybe I'll be back with Xie Yuan [of *King of the Children*] next time!

"The best thing in the novel is the emphasis on how difficult it is to stay true to what you want to make of yourself. And how difficult it is to keep relationships intact when you come under pressure from social and political forces. I like the mixture of personal and emotional themes and the thread of social and historical comment that runs through the story. For me, obviously, one key thing was the question of personal betrayal during the Cultural Revolution". (During the fallow years in New York before *Life on a String*, Chen wrote a short memoir of his experiences during the Cultural Revolution at the invitation of the Japanese publisher, Kodansha. The original Chinese text was published in Taiwan last year. The book contains an agonising section about his denunciation to the authorities of his own father.)

"I've said this endlessly, but I have to repeat that the Cultural Revolution marked me as nothing else has or ever will. It still haunts me. I still think so much about how hard it was to form any kind of relationship at that time, and about the gap between what you said in public and thought in private, and about the primary need to protect yourself. The main 'achievement' of the Cultural Revolution was to destroy people's quality.

"During the writing of this film, I tried to understand more about human beings. In my earlier films, there was always a character that I identified with, someone I liked. This time it's different. Let them be who they are. I don't care. Human beings are more complicated than those I showed before. This time, I'm not forcing any character to do anything to please (or displease) me. That's the major change".

Monday

Back to Beijing Film Studio for a screening of three hours of rushes. Thanks to the accidents of scheduling, I haven't been able to watch Leslie Cheung in action on the opera stage, but I'm promised that the rushes will provide a good sampling of his performance. We chat briefly before they start: he's coping OK with acting in Mandarin; he's relieved that it takes only ninety minutes (rather than the expected four hours) to make up for the stage scenes; he enjoys acting with Gong Li but finds Zhang Fengyi's method a little stiff. Most important, he's sure that they're making a great film.

Three hours later, I conclude that he's probably right. Aside from a misjudged smoke effect in a backstage scene, which makes it look as if the room is on fire, the rushes are magnificent. Chen Kaige and Gu Changwei have grasped the potential of shooting in a studio as if they'd never known anything else, and the material seems to strike the optimum balance between emotional dynamics and sumptuous pictorialism. When it's over, Leslie sidles up and asks: "How did I look? Beautiful?" One word tells the truth and nothing but. I say: "Gorgeous". Grateful thanks to Hsu Feng, Shu Kei, Chen Kaige and Charles Teng for making it possible for me to write this article

Brian De Palma talks about 'Raising Cain', voyeurism, doubles, misogyny and film grammar. By Peter Keough

OUT OF THE ASHES

When the critics hooted at the Los Angeles press screening of *Raising Cain*, Brian De Palma must have smelled the smoke of another *Bonfire of the Vanities* in the air. The story of Carter Nix, a child psychologist bedevilled by a twisted, and possibly imaginary Norwegian father, by an evil twin named Cain (all three roles played by John Lithgow), and by an adulterous wife (Lolita Davidovich), the film is a non-stop romp involving kidnapping, child abuse, multiple personalities, cross-dressing, murder, flashbacks, dream sequences and baroque violence. It is further addled by De Palma's trademark visual kineticism, narrative convolutions, and allusions to films ranging from Hitchcock's *Psycho* to Michael Powell's *Peeping Tom*. It assaulted the preview audience with scenes so excessive and implausible that many concluded that it was a deliberate – and hilarious – self-parody.

Whatever the original intention, that's the line De Palma and the marketing people have taken as well. Originally described in press kits as a "romantic suspense thriller" and a "return to a genre made popular by Hollywood classics", after the disastrous screening the film was promoted as "a departure from the traditional suspense thriller... a devilishly funny film which combines wry humour with shocks and thrills". "It's my sensibility", De Palma insisted. "I mean, I think it's funny and scary. I've just got a black sense of humour. You disarm audiences when they're laughing. They feel like everything's under control. And then you can really nail them".

As it turned out, the film didn't nail them. Grossing a modest \$21 million in the US and receiving mixed reviews, it was hardly the comeback De Palma might have wanted after the debacle of *Bonfire*. Although it cost \$10 million to make, and will after its European and video releases undoubtedly make a profit, this modest showing would seem a negation of the kind of ambitious, challenging, often infuriating film-making that has distinguished De Palma's career – and of which *Raising Cain* is a near-hysterical summation. But every time the director goes down in the flames of another *Bonfire*, he seems to rise again from the ashes. His resilience is due in part to his inventiveness in expanding and reconfiguring the language of film. And much of his enduring appeal lies in his preoccupation with themes essential to cinema and the human spirit – the nature of duality, the mysteries of memory, guilt and desire, and the allure of the forbidden image.

De Palma's work is known for other qualities, however, that are less appealing, such as his taste for violence to women. A woman is brutally assaulted within the first ten minutes of *Cain*, and accusations of misogyny have long

dogged De Palma, not without reason. His films have shown women as dehumanised objects of voyeuristic pleasure (*Greetings, Hi Mom!*, *Body Double*), demonic agents of evil (*Sisters*, *Carrie*, *The Fury*), and victims of sadistic male violence (*Dressed to Kill*, *Blow Out*, *Casualties of War*). "You know you're going to be bored again with my stock answer", De Palma sighs when confronted with the familiar question. "Usually I put women in jeopardy because I think they are more vulnerable. It became very unfashionable in the 80s to put a woman in jeopardy. You were immediately accused of being sexist, so that went out of the genre. Now you put men and machines in jeopardy, or children".

Directing for effect

In short, De Palma is saying that he uses women as objects to ogle and violate because it works. For De Palma, women are tools to manipulate an audience, which gives rise to another criticism of his movies – that he directs merely for effect, with little heed to the integrity of the work as a whole. Critics contend that he indulges in showy mannerisms to conceal a lack of content.

Certainly *Raising Cain* could provide plenty of evidence to support that contention. In one sequence, Frances Sternhagen plays a psychologist rattling out a long-winded, *Psycho*-like explanation of a suspect's murderous, multi-personality malady. Sensing a lull, De Palma indulges in a steadicam tracking shot lasting about five minutes. Isn't this just a gratuitous trick, a distraction from the story and a reminder of the artifice?

De Palma agrees, but feels that stylistic novelty is of value for its own sake. "It's like that Orson Welles thing", he says. "What a toy train set you've got. You've got all these things you can do. Do you really want to go to work every day and shoot two-shots of people talking to each other? Is that directing? I could take a script out and photograph it and I can be called a director: the story's all there, they walk in the door, they sit down, then they get in the car and there's a car chase. But to me, that's not directing, it's being asleep at the switch. When you can put that camera anywhere and you can make it do anything, it's like you can put anything on that canvas. Well, why not think about it a bit?"

"I don't think it should be so showy that it takes away from what's going on", he adds. "But you shouldn't have that awful scene that happens in every thriller where you bring the audience up to speed. Should we sit them in an office and have them drink coffee, and have her talk for five minutes? How do you make that interesting? So you figure out some way. Most stuff is just xeroxed and shown over

again, and that's when it becomes very boring. Anything inventive and new is something you can't pigeonhole but you have to take that risk".

Not that everything De Palma does is inventive or new – he's notorious for borrowing not just motifs but whole movies from other directors, most often from Hitchcock. *Sisters* (1972) reworks *Psycho* and *Rear Window*; *Obsession* (1975) takes its lead from *Vertigo* with apologies to *Rebecca*; *Psycho* is reprised in *Dressed to Kill* (1980); *Rear Window* makes a return in *Body Double* (1984). In *Raising Cain*, De Palma's allusions seem more playful and self-conscious: he refers not to the original film, but to his own previous allusion to it (a killer in drag refers back to *Dressed to Kill*'s allusion to *Psycho*; an endangered baby carriage to *The Untouchables*' allusion to *Potemkin*). Is De Palma attempting a cinematic intertextuality, a post-modernist deconstruction of film language? Or was he just lazily plagiarising techniques that work for cheap thrills and perhaps a pretension to cinema literacy? For De Palma, neither applies – imitation of other film-makers is a practical inevitability.

"These are tired perceptions – that because somebody's wearing a wig it's *Psycho*, or *Dressed to Kill*", he says. "Hitchcock made fifty movies and explored every kind of visual grammar of suspense and action. So somewhere, if you're working with this type of visual storytelling, you're going to be using material Hitchcock has used before. You have somebody walking down a corridor, or going up a flight of stairs – he's used that shot somewhere before. It's almost impossible not to fall into his grammar, which is, of course, the best.

"But Hitchcock only made *Psycho* once", De Palma concludes. "His career ranges over a whole bunch of other obsessions. I've spent a long time making movies about doubles and twins and psychological characters that are driven by good and evil". It's this obsession which suggests that something deeper lurks beneath De Palma's seeming superficiality. Even in those films most obviously conforming to the requirements of a genre – the bland *The Untouchables* (1987) or the overwrought *Scarface* (1983) – this motif gives a meaning beyond the obvious. In *The Untouchables*, Kevin Costner's Elliot Ness is a whitebread family man lost in the jungle of prohibition Chicago. In order to protect his bourgeois values against the demonic Al Capone, he must get in touch with his darker qualities and learn "the Chicago way" of violence and treachery, in which he is tutored by the ethnic intermediary Malone (Sean Connery) – an Irishman apparently being midway between a WASP and an Italian. It's male bonding of an intense order – Malone virtually replaces Ness' wife – and in the end the triumphant Fed can say: "I have violated every law

I have sworn to uphold; I have become what I beheld; and I believe I have done right".

The doubling in the more operatic *Scarface* is more complex. The initial couple consists of Cuban emigré gangsters Tony Montana (Al Pacino) and his buddy Manny Ray (Steven Bauer). The two bond and prevail, rising in the underworld ranks. But Tony is enticed by the gelid Elvira (Michelle Pfeiffer), the near inert embodiment of woman as beautiful object. And Manny takes a shine to Tony's sister Gina (Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio), with whom Tony too is incestuously infatuated. Unable to reconcile his contempt for Elvira, his unacknowledged desire for Gina, and his jealousy of Manny, Tony breaks down and everyone dies in a catharsis of violence.

The theme of the double is expressed most profoundly and provocatively, however, in those films that dwell on the ambiguities of gender and identity. *Sisters*, *Phantom of the Paradise*, *Obsession*, *The Fury*, *Dressed to Kill* and *Body Double* literally embody the dualities of male and female, of good and evil, and of ego and id in twins, split personalities and false identities. An even more important duality for the filmmaker is that between subjectivity and alienated experience, the subject of another film alluded to in *Raising Cain*, *Peeping Tom*. "It ended Powell's career, too, I might add", De Palma notes archly. "*Peeping Tom* has to do with a psychologist who is traumatising his child and taping movies of it. Ultimately the child grows up and is obsessed by fear and proceeds to kill people and record their responses. In *Raising Cain*, the psychologist has all kinds of theories about multiple personality and creates a multiple-personality child with his own son".

In *Peeping Tom*, the mad psychologist father

forces his son to observe his own fear, making his experience both the object and subject of his voyeurism. It is an extreme representation of the film-maker's – and film audience's – plight: complete detachment, but complete involvement in what happens on screen.

The situation is dramatised in *Blow Out*, which De Palma sees as his most personal film. John Travolta plays a sound engineer who electronically eavesdrops on the planning of a political assassination. He falls in love with a prostitute who is entangled in the conspiracy, and the more involved he becomes, the less control he has over what happens. "I feel very political about what I observe and the world around me", explains De Palma, "but I also feel I'm very much on the fringe and have very little effect on it. Directing is standing behind the camera and watching what other people do. You are a person with an active, provocative role and then you're a person that has to have a very quiet, sensory presence. So there is much of the split personality there. You have to make things happen and then you have to sit back and see what you have created and in order to make it effective, you've got to be detached. So it's a schizophrenic profession".

Perhaps it's this "schizophrenia", and not misogyny or even De Palma's self-confessed exploitativeness, that accounts for his depiction of women. As he has observed, women serve well as victims because the audience identifies more easily with their vulnerability. Consequently they are objects of empathy as much as of voyeurism – like the killer in *Peeping Tom*, we experience the victim's terror even as we observe it. The endangered woman resolves the duality of the director's, and the viewer's, experience. And so in films such as *Sisters*,

Carrie, *The Fury*, *Dressed to Kill*, *Blow Out* and *Body Double*, women are not just the victims, but the heroes, and sometimes the villains.

Playing with form

De Palma's obsession with duality is also reflected in his films' narrative structure. In *Raising Cain*, we are barely introduced to Carter Nix and his nefarious father and twin when the film is blindsided by another story – that of his wife's guilty affair with vacant hunk Steven Bauer. The two stories bounce off one another in a wacky fugue, baroquely ornamented by De Palma's melodramatic excesses. "That has always been my structure", says De Palma. "From *Greetings and Hi, Mom!* I have one story colliding into another in the most absurdist way, completely turning the other one around. That's what's happening in *Raising Cain*. Even though those people are married, they are involved in completely different psychological storylines. One is fantasising about multiples and twins and dead or perhaps not dead fathers, while the other is off on a fantasy about a lost love. They just happen to stumble across each other, which causes all the impending tragedy of the movie".

Despite the artifice of their style, De Palma is convinced that his movies reflect the psychological reality of experience much more accurately than the conventional pabulum that passes for film today. "Things happen because absurdities interact upon each other, by chance rather than as a result of man's endless philosophising and rationalisation. But audiences are very much used to being told what they're going to see and feel, so they're very comfortable with that. Any movie that makes you a little uncomfortable is good news to me, because it means you're experiencing things that you are not familiar with. But when you make a film that plays with form it throws a lot of people off. They're not used to playing with form the way we did in the 60s and 70s with Godard or Antonioni.

"I don't know what the solution is. With *Bonfire*, we tried to please too many people and pleased none of them. But movies cost huge sums of money; if you deviate too far from the mainstream you're going to have no audience".

De Palma is currently working on *Carlito's Way*, a gangster film starring Al Pacino. It seems likely to have less of the operatic excess of the disastrous *Scarface* and more of the slick commerciality of the money-making *The Untouchables*. "It's very conventional", admits De Palma. "Otherwise you find you get reviews like: 'it doesn't make any sense', 'it's ridiculous', or 'it's laughable'".

Raising Cain opens on 26 December and is reviewed on page 46 of this issue



Conjuring up the past: Lolita Davidovich in 'Raising Cain', a homage to film history – or a poor pastiche?



Passage' and of the facially-banded gangster's moll scarred by boiling coffee in Fritz Lang's 'The Big Heat' – rendered sexually useless at the point at which she becomes most exotic, her sexuality charged by the shadowy lighting and her vulnerability.)

It is as if Jake's mutilation and its intense visibility throughout the film (until he makes love to Faye Dunaway's impossible woman – mother and sister to the same object) is the visual sign of the plot's future disclosure of incest as its real motivational thrust. Jake's white plasters and bandages are the site of obliteration – the narcissistic hurt of the phallus and the mark of the incestuous union between Cross and his daughter.

In Michael Powell's 'The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp' (2), the dashing Candy has his face slashed in a duel with the German officer Theo, an event which scars his future. Blimp repeatedly pursues the same female image (Deborah Kerr plays the three parts of governess, nurse/wife, MTC driver). Once again, sexuality is frozen with the elaborate nose bandage.

The films of Georges Franju draw on Apollinaire, Cocteau and Breton, together with popular culture. In 'Les Yeux sans visage' (3) the 'heroine' is disfigured by her father, who then lures young students in order to graft their faces on to hers. The bandages and mask she wears throughout come to represent her father's denial of her sexuality. His daughter, the true object of his desire, is made almost marionette-like to allow him to displace that desire on to substitutes – a never-ending series of young victims along the lines of Blimp's women.

Flies

In a stage on the route to dehumanisation, the body is treated as a corpse, a death-by-psychosis where the skin becomes a non-sensory limit of the body now collapsed into mind. In *Psycho* (4) Norman has become separated from his body, perceiving it as the object of his own gaze. In Buñuel's 'Un chien andalou' (5), the body is fragmented into a myriad of *mise en scènes* of desire, disobeying all

rational laws of spatio-temporality – a naked woman in a field evaporates; a severed hand in the street is watched by an androgynous woman, who in turn is watched by the hero, who as a result becomes demented in love; hands are magically filled with pistols; dresses dematerialise to reveal breasts to be kneaded in desire. The ants in the palm of the door-trapped hand of the psychotic hero are synonymous with mad love, with the annihilation of desire in death.

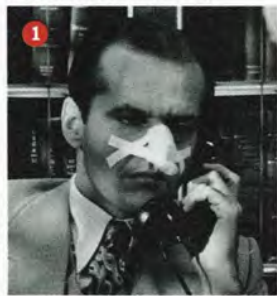


The body bandaged

The eroticism of the false beauty spot or small tattoo on the female body lies in part in its precision, its deliberate marking of a place that is almost a fetish for the hidden site of sex itself. For the male, the scar, long, thin and also precise, has a similar erotic function.

In 'Chinatown' (1), Jake's nose is penetrated and slashed by the blade of gangster film-maker Roman Polanski in an act of rape – the mutilation of the most prominent visible feature of the body. The wounded face with its

precisely placed plasters reminds us of a deliberate and meticulous bondage. (Jake is a descendant of Humphrey Bogart's head-banded hero in Delmer Daves' 'Dark



RONALD GRANT

From the scar of 'Chinatown' to the machine men of Robocop', the Surrealist body has found its way into film. By Mike O'Pray

OVERWHELMING BODIES

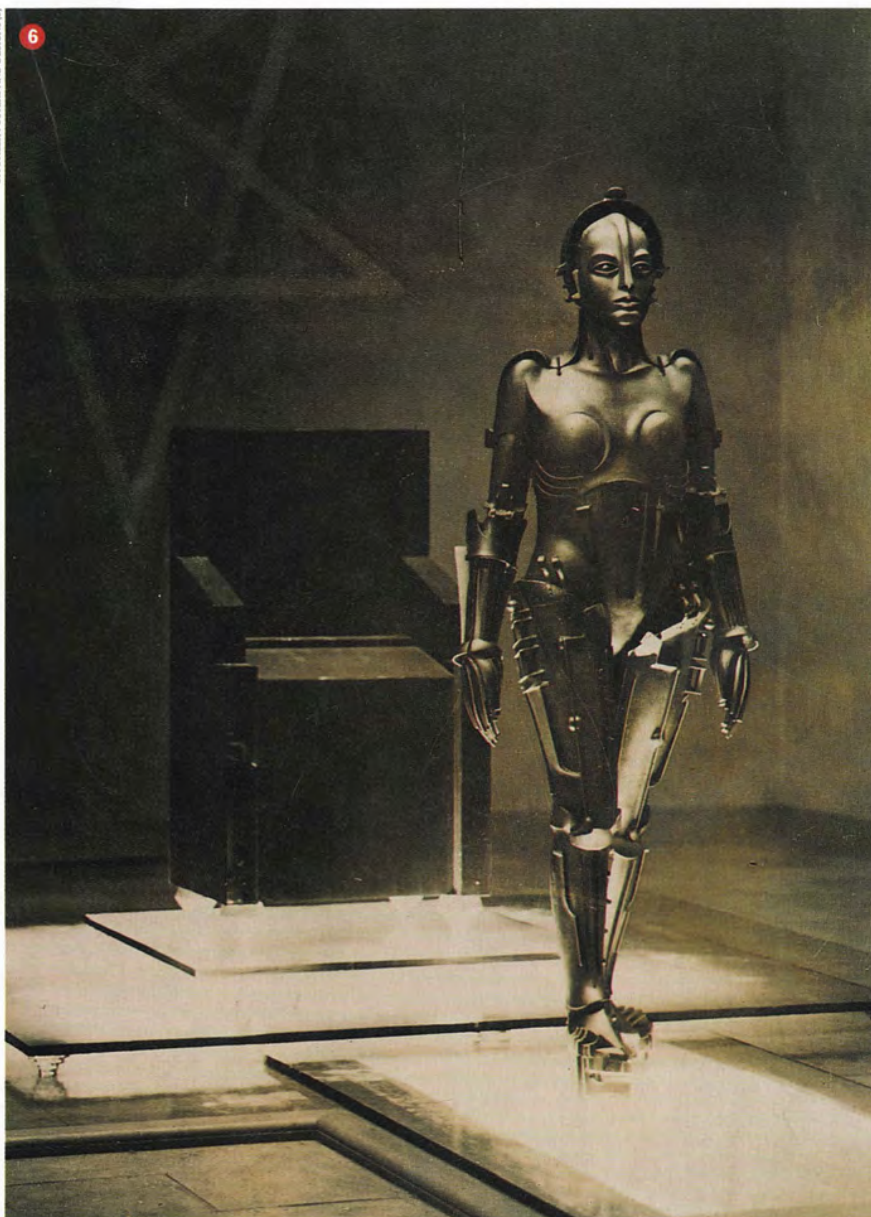
The art theorist Adrian Stokes remarked in the 60s that there is "a sense in which all art is of the body". It should be added that Stokes disliked Surrealism, the source of much subsequent work on the body this century, and had more in mind the projection on to art, by maker and spectator alike, of unconscious fantasies of largely "corporeal content". In this respect, Stokes was at one with Freud himself, who found Surrealism quite mad and beyond the artistic pale – the only exception he made was for Dali, whose drawing skills he admired. Yet if the common image of Surrealism is of

weird dreams, soft clocks dripping from tables, or extra-normal figures stuck in strange landscapes, then a flick through the photographic work of Man Ray, Hans Bellmer (now taken up by Cindy Sherman), Raoul Ubac and Jacques-André Boiffard reveals the importance of the body (usually female) as a site for Surrealist projections and experiments.

Among the most memorable images are two naked females (one a mannequin) poised in the act of love-making; a close-up of a woman urinating; a nude seen through the exotic shadow of a mesh curtain; a woman's face half-

hidden in an old mirror; a handcuffed woman in a tight leather mask; the limbs of a doll in violent disarray. Fetishism (toes, hair, buttocks, decayed skin), the use of mannequins and dolls, the treatment of the body as almost dehumanised – these stand in Surrealism for the nexus of desires associated with the body. And such displacements appear particularly strongly in Surrealist photography, in which the influence of psychoanalysis is more subtle and disturbing than anything to be found in Dali's paintings.

With the obvious exception of Buñuel, this



Machine man

The eroticism of shiny materials. In 'Metropolis' (6) we find the woman as machine, the dehumanised marionette, with its potential for pornographic manipulation. (Madonna in her book 'Sex' displays a similar robot-like quality.) 'Robocop' (7), 'Total Recall', and 'Terminator' exude the power of the anxious male who sacrifices his sexuality to his struggle for complete control – at his core is nothing but nuts, bolts and computer parts, desire negated by the

machine. The attraction is obvious – you too can swap the anxieties of sexuality for omnipotence. In the case of 'Edward Scissorhands' (8), the seductiveness lies in the recognition by women that he is not sexually omnipotent, overpowering and aggressive. The sexual is displaced to the scissorhands where his powers lie, and once again his desire is rendered impossible. 'Scissorhands' is the softer version of 'Robocop', but the upshot for the male is the same: sexual anxiety = castration = no anxiety.



sensibility is absent from the cinema associated with the Surrealists, who tended to concentrate on discovering "innocent" reflections of their own concerns in the involuntary Surrealism of the likes of Keaton, Chaplin, Keystone Kops and films such as *King Kong*. It could be argued that the role of the body in Surrealist photography was ahead of its time, and its most powerful filmic elaboration can be found at different moments in post-war Hollywood.

There are echoes of Surrealism in some strains of 50s and 60s cinema – in the fetishisation of the vacant, soulless puppet/marionette

which appears in the brainwashing Cold War-paranoid, 50s science-fiction movies or in the zombie and vampire films, whose victims fall under the control of an external force and become bodies without souls or minds. Great marionette scenes within this latter vein include the final sequence of Corman's *Tomb of Ligeia*, in which the undead Ligeia struggles with Vincent Price in the flames, and the psychotic Norman sitting against the white wall watching the fly alight on his hand in Hitchcock's *Psycho*. But the preoccupations of Surrealism have reappeared in another guise in recent

years, in the context of a mainstream and avant-garde concern with sexuality and its so-called perversions. They are there in the recent spate of films that deal with sexuality as the expression of a *fin-de-siècle* psychosis: *Blue Steel*, *The Silence of the Lambs*, *Basic Instinct*. (The psychotic being – the body driven by the alienated mind – could be argued to be the closest a human gets to a mannequin-like state.) And within this general tendency, we can distinguish variations that move from a fetishism that negates the body as sexual, to examples of the body displaced by other materialities.

● The first *Sight and Sound* 'top ten' poll was conducted among critics in 1952 to parallel a Brussels referendum among film-makers. On the fourth anniversary of this now established ten-yearly event, it seemed the right moment to complement the critics' poll with one among film-makers. After all, contemporary film-makers can be just as passionate historians of cinema as the best critics; each list would offer us a sketch of the film-maker who made it; and it could only be fascinating to compare the two polls – the critics' and the film-makers'.

Our aim was to poll about the same number of critics as last time and to invite responses from some 100 directors. Our chosen critics would range from daily reviewers and writers through academics (a burgeoning group in the 80s) to archivists. We also wanted to include

critics from countries not featured in previous polls – Hong Kong, China and Russia. The chosen directors would range from established film-makers such as Fellini, Scorsese and Minal Sen through avant-gardists such as Stan Brakhage and Michael Snow to young independents such as Monika Treut and Srinivas Krishna, whose *Masala* recently opened in Britain.

Almost all the critics we contacted responded. Almost all the directors did likewise, but not always favourably. For some directors, our request was too painful, traduced the seriousness of film, or demanded the impossible – only ten films! Film-makers who responded in one of these ways include Elia Kazan, Gus Van Sant, Sembène, Francesco Rosi, Godard and the Taviani brothers. The eloquent response of Oshima, whose *Ai No Corrida* is mentioned in the polls, may stand

for them all: "I am not at all against the 'top ten'. But it is very painful for me as a director to choose films. Please forgive me for not sending an answer".

With the changes that mark the distance between the last poll and this one, it is remarkable that *Citizen Kane*, which has topped the list in the last three *Sight and Sound* polls, should reign supreme for both critics and film-makers. But apart from the continuing dominance of *Kane*, the most striking thing about the polls is the fact that no post-60s film appears among the critics' 'top ten', while *Raging Bull* and *The Godfather* and *The Godfather Part II* make the directors'. How are we to explain the difference in judgment? Perhaps film-makers cannot afford to be divorced from present cinema, whereas many critics (and of course there are numerous exceptions) see the films of the past

TOP 10 FILMS

CRITICS' TOP 10 FILMS 1992

	VOTES
1 <i>Citizen Kane</i> Welles 1941	43
2 <i>La Règle du jeu</i> Renoir 1939	32
3 <i>Tokyo Story</i> Ozu 1953	22
4 <i>Vertigo</i> Hitchcock 1958	18
5 <i>The Searchers</i> Ford 1956	17
6 <i>L'Atalante</i> Vigo 1934	15
<i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> Dreyer 1928	15
<i>Pather Panchali</i> Ray 1955	15
<i>Battleship Potemkin</i> Eisenstein 1925	15
10 <i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> Kubrick 1968	14

DIRECTORS' TOP 10 FILMS 1992

	VOTES
1 <i>Citizen Kane</i> Welles 1941	30
2 <i>Raging Bull</i> Scorsese 1980	16
3 <i>8½</i> Fellini 1963	16
4 <i>La strada</i> Fellini 1954	12
5 <i>L'Atalante</i> Vigo 1934	11
6 <i>Modern Times</i> Chaplin 1936	10
<i>The Godfather</i> Coppola 1972	10
<i>Vertigo</i> Hitchcock 1958	10
9 <i>Seven Samurai</i> Kurosawa 1954	9
<i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> Dreyer 1928	9
<i>The Godfather Part II</i> Coppola 1974	9
<i>Rashomon</i> Kurosawa 1950	9

more as a solace, as fragments to shore against the present ruins. It may be that many critics see themselves as curators for some imaginary museum, whereas some directors are more like obsessive collectors feeding some private need (see, for example, Stan Brakhage's list).

The reflections and questions that arise from these perhaps arbitrary polls are legion. What does it mean that the British critics' top two films are *Vertigo* and *Tokyo Story*? Why is it that 'film' still seems to mean theatrically released feature films, although certain documentaries do surface? Particular films appear to have a national rather than international reputation: *Listen to Britain* and *Performance* are good examples. It may well be that certain films matter to a generation: the appearance of Chantal Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman* on some lists seems to be one such example. With the excep-

tions of Akerman, Maya Deren, Jane Campion and a few others, women directors are noticeable by their absence. One or two of the Russian lists seem to register the sudden influx of US movies into that post-Soviet country. And what is it about *Pather Panchali* and *Tokyo Story*, the latter in the 'top ten' here for the first time, that ensures that they are the two 'non-western' films that make it into the 'top ten'?

This last matter, of 'west' and 'the rest', is perhaps the other major issue raised by the polls; and on the basis of the choices, there seems to be a *geography* as much as a *history* of cinema at work. Even if no critics or film-makers work predominantly in terms of national cinema, it is very noticeable, for example, that the list of, say, a Japanese critic may include films that rarely, if ever, surface in lists from western critics. This raises the question of how available is

the range of world cinema to any of us, and particularly to those of us in the west? If these polls do nothing else, at least they give us a glimpse, however partial and inadequate, of what the range of the 'best' world cinema might look like.

Prompted by the polls, Ian Christie's and Ginette Vincendeau's articles, which follow the 'top ten', are the opening contributions to an occasional series that looks at arguments raised by questions about the cinematic canon.

As in previous polls, we have used the English titles for films, except on those occasions where the film is better known in Britain by its original title. Also, as in the past, we have resisted identifying the director of each film, doing so only when the film is 'obscure' (and what to one person is obscure is commonplace to another!).



'Citizen Kane'

CRITICS' TOP 10 DIRECTORS 1992

	VOTES
1 Welles	58
2 Renoir	50
3 Godard	42
4 Hitchcock	39
5 Chaplin	36
6 Ford	34
7 Ray	32
8 Ozu	30
9 Dreyer	29
10 Eisenstein	26

DIRECTORS' TOP 10 DIRECTORS 1992

	VOTES
1 Fellini	45
2 Welles	42
3 Kurosawa	32
4 Coppola	26
5 Scorsese	23
Buñuel	23
7 Bergman	22
8 Chaplin	21
Ford	21
10 Hitchcock	20

Gilbert Adair

United Kingdom
L'Argent (L'Herbier)
Bande à part
Les Dames du Bois de Boulogne (Bresson)
Gertrud
Limelight
La Nuit du carrefour
Playtime
Sunrise
Le Testament d'Orphée
Trouble in Paradise

Ahn Byung Sup

South Korea
Citizen Kane
The Gold Rush
Ikiru
Bicycle Thieves
Nostalgia
The Passion of Joan of Arc
Battleship Potemkin
The Green Ray
La Règle du jeu
Why Did Bodhi-Dharma Leave for the East? (Bae Yong-Kyun)

Nigel Andrews

United Kingdom, 'Financial Times'
Aguirre, Wrath of God
Annie Hall
Casablanca
Citizen Kane
The Colour of Pomegranates
Distant Voices, Still Lives
The Godfather & The Godfather Part II
Heaven's Gate
Mirror
Vertigo

Bob Baker

United Kingdom, 'Film Dope'
A Canterbury Tale
The Dream of the Rarebit Fiend (McCay)
L'Eclisse
Housekeeping
Lunga vita alla Signora!
Near Death (Wiseman)
Night of the Hunter
Shoot the Pianist
Tanner '88
Touch of Evil

Lynden Barber

Australia, 'The Sydney Morning Herald'
Apocalypse Now
Citizen Kane
Modern Times
The Night of the Hunter
Los olvidados
Once Upon a Time in the West
Pather Panchali
Singin' in the Rain
Tokyo Story
Vertigo

Bruce Bawer

USA
My Mother's Castle (Yves Robert)
To Kill a Mockingbird
Who Framed Roger Rabbit
The World According to Garp
The Player
Letter from an Unknown Woman
Mr. and Mrs. Bridge
Kind Hearts and Coronets
North by Northwest
Death in Venice

Claude Beylie

France
The Birth of a Nation
Sunrise
M
L'Atalante
The Scarlet Empress
La Règle du jeu
Le Plaisir (Ophüls)
Sansho Dayu
A Countess from Hong Kong (Chaplin)
The Sacrifice (Tarkovsky)

Irene Bignardi

Italy
8½
The Passenger (Antonioni)
Nashville
City Lights
Some Like It Hot
The Exterminating Angel
Jules et Jim
A bout de souffle
Favourites of the Moon (Otar Ioseliani)
Citizen Kane

Peter Biskind

USA, 'Premiere'
Modern Times
On the Waterfront
Raging Bull
Battleship Potemkin
Citizen Kane
Metropolis
A bout de souffle
La strada
Jules et Jim
Chinatown

David Bordwell

USA, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Au hasard Balthazar
Early Summer
The General
How Green Was My Valley
Ivan the Terrible
The Passion of Joan of Arc
Playtime
Rear Window
La Règle du jeu
Sansho Dayu

Gian Piero Brunetta

Italy, University of Padua
The Tree of Wooden Clogs
Citizen Kane
Intolerance
The Kid
Bicycle Thieves
Ordet (Dreyer)
8½
Paisà
Une partie de campagne
Stagecoach

Peter Buchka

Germany, 'Süddeutsche Zeitung'
The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance
Tokyo Story
Dr. Mabuse the Gambler
La Règle du jeu
Sunrise
Intolerance
Design for Living
Pierrot le fou
The Travelling Players
Kings of the Road

Ed Buscombe

United Kingdom, BFI
Boudu Saved from Drowning
Stella Dallas
The Philadelphia Story
Life of Oharu
The Band Wagon
The Searchers
Rio Bravo
North by Northwest
La notte
Ride the High Country

Vincent Canby

USA, 'New York Times'
Intolerance
The Circus (Chaplin)
The General
Sherlock Jr.
Nights of Cabiria
Some Like It Hot
Rear Window
The Magnificent Ambersons
Weekend
Badlands

Cheng Jihua

China, China Film Association
Battleship Potemkin
Citizen Kane
La Règle du jeu
The Gold Rush
Rome, Open City
The Lin Family Shop (Zhang Shuihua)
Ran
Singin' in the Rain
Ghandi
The Story of Qiu Ju (Zhang Yimou)

Ian Christie

United Kingdom
Chimes at Midnight
A Diary for Timothy (Humphrey Jennings)
The Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting (Raúl Ruiz)
Letter from an Unknown Woman
A Matter of Life and Death
Le Mépris
Nostalgia (Hollis Frampton)
October
The Searchers
The Tale of Tales (Yury Norstein)

Michel Ciment

France, 'Positif'/'L'Express'
Dr. Mabuse the Gambler
The Navigator (Keaton)
L'Atalante
La Règle du jeu
The Magnificent Ambersons
It's a Wonderful Life
Letter from an Unknown Woman
Ugetsu Monogatari
Casanova (Fellini)
Fanny and Alexander

Richard Combs

United Kingdom, S&S
Altman's desert trilogy (3 Women; Come Back to the 5 & Dime Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean; Quintet)
Barry Lyndon
Dream Street (Griffith)
Escape from Alcatraz
The Lightship
7 Women
Ulzana's Raid
Ten Days' Wonder
Signs of Life (Herzog)
Unforgiven

Pam Cook

United Kingdom, S&S
Lola Montès (Ophüls)
Gone to Earth
Meshes of the Afternoon
My Darling Clementine
La Belle et la bête
Lilith
Gone with the Wind
Near Dark (Kathryn Bigelow)
The Silence of the Lambs
The Last Temptation of Christ

Callisto Cosulich

Italy
Ai No Corrida
Decalogue
Full Metal Jacket
Heimat
Ivan the Terrible
Monsieur Verdoux
Paisà
The Scarlet Empress
Tokyo Story
Ugetsu Monogatari

Oscar Cosulich

Italy
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
Who Framed Roger Rabbit
Beauty and the Beast (Disney)
Freaks
Citizen Kane
North by Northwest
2001: A Space Odyssey
The Front Page (Wilder)
Apocalypse Now
Dead Ringers

Peter Cowie

United Kingdom, 'International Film Guide'
La Grande illusion
Les Enfants du paradis
Seven Samurai
Senso
The Seventh Seal
Vertigo
Lawrence of Arabia
Chimes at Midnight
The Godfather
Three Brothers (Francesco Rosi)

Marcel Croës

Belgium, RTBF
Why Did Bodhi-Dharma Leave for the East?
The Music Room
Bicycle Thieves
The Last Laugh
M
Une partie de campagne
The Tall Men (Walsh)
Trouble in Paradise (Lubitsch)
Tokyo Story
The Wizard of Oz

Paolo D'Agostini

Italy, 'La Repubblica'
The Apartment
Bicycle Thieves
Il sorpasso (Dino Risi)
The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner
Rashomon
The Servant
High Noon
Germany, Year Zero
M
Ashes and Diamonds

Manthia Diawara

Mali/USA, NYU
A bout de souffle
Moi, un noir
Xala (Sembène)
The Money Order (Sembène)
Yeelen (Souleymane Cissé)
The Garbage Boys (Cheick Oumar Sissoko)
Killer of Sheep
Do the Right Thing
The Good, the Bad and the Ugly
Scarlet Street

Philip Dodd

United Kingdom, S&S
Time of the Gypsies (Kusturica)
Pather Panchali
City Lights
The Battle of Algiers
Listen to Britain
Le Mépris
Paisà
Raging Bull
The Searchers
Nosferatu

Wolf Donner

Germany
Citizen Kane
Wild Strawberries
La dolce vita
Metropolis
Modern Times
The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie
A Woman Under the Influence
2001: A Space Odyssey
Stalker
Pierrot le fou

Jean Douchet

France
Street of Shame (Mizoguchi)
La Règle du jeu
Gertrud
Tabu (Murnau)
The Sun Shines Bright
Journey to Italy
Le Mépris
The Tiger of Eschnapur (Lang)
Monsieur Verdoux
The Birth of a Nation

Raymond Durnat

United Kingdom
Un chien andalou
Dom (Borowczyk)
Lenica
How I Won the War (Richard Lester)
Lettre de Sibérie (Chris Marker)
Miracle in Milan
The Murder of Dmitri Karamazov (Ozep)
Pather Panchali
Powers of Ten (Charles and Ray Eames)
Ruby Gentry
Vampyr
 Faced with this impossible assignment, I've chosen films conveying human(ist) content through a diversity of aesthetics. A list of films, alas, must eliminate the greatest cinema, which comes in sequences (*The Red Shoes* ballet, the peak of cinema, Darrioux and Boyer in Ophüls' *La Ronde*, some musical numbers, etc.).

Michael Dwyer
 Eire, 'The Irish Times'
 Barry Lyndon
 Battleship Potemkin
 Bonnie and Clyde
 Citizen Kane
 His Girl Friday
 Jesus of Montreal
 La Nuit américaine
 Raging Bull
 The Wild Bunch
 Z

Richard Dyer
 United Kingdom,
 University of Warwick
 Brief Encounter
 Day of the Dead (Romero)
 India Song
 Maciste all'inferno
 (Guido Brignone)
 Mädchen in Uniform
 (Sagan)
 Meet Me in St. Louis
 Pakeezah (Kamal Amrohi)
 Seduced and Abandoned
 (Pietro Germi)
 Storm over Asia
 Tokyo Story

Thomas Elsaesser
 United Kingdom/
 Amsterdam University
 Bigger than Life
 (Nicholas Ray)
 Boudou Saved from Drowning
 Brazil
 Kings of the Road
 Le Mépris
 Lucky Star (Borzage)
 Out of the Past
 Spione (Lang)
 Traffic in Souls
 (George Loane Tucker)
 Trouble in Paradise
 (Lubitsch)
 The choice is very
 personal and reflects
 my delight that there
 are still so many films
 (from the 10s and 20s)
 to be (re)discovered...

Dan Fainaru
 Israel
 Battleship Potemkin
 The Gold Rush
 La Règle du jeu
 Citizen Kane
 Tokyo Story
 Ikiru
 8½
 Fanny and Alexander
 Shoah
 Decalogue

Edna Fainaru
 Israel
 Citizen Kane
 Seven Samurai
 Salvatore Giuliano
 Muriel
 Rear Window
 Journey to Italy
 Sullivan's Travels
 Floating Clouds
 (Naruse Mikio)
 Shoah
 Decalogue

Alberto Farassino
 Italy, 'La Repubblica'
 Accattone
 L'Atalante
 Apocalypse Now
 Citizen Kane
 Monsieur Verdoux
 Paisà
 Persona
 Queen Kelly
 La Règle du jeu
 Sunrise

Philip French
 United Kingdom,
 'The Observer'
 The Lady Vanishes
 Bringing Up Baby
 La Règle du jeu
 Stagecoach
 Citizen Kane
 The Third Man
 Singin' in the Rain
 Seven Samurai
 The Apu trilogy
 Wild Strawberries
 The order is
 chronological, only one
 movie is in colour and
 the list fails to
 acknowledge the
 pleasure of silent cinema
 or the immense
 enjoyment I've had over
 the past thirty years,
 during which I've usually
 had difficulty restricting
 myself to ten annual
 favourites...

Tomislav Gavrić
 Belgrade
 Battleship Potemkin
 The Great Dictator
 Citizen Kane
 Diary of a Country Priest
 Persona
 Belle de jour
 Kagemusha
 La notte
 Wings of Desire
 The Birds

Jeanette Gentele
 Sweden,
 'Svenska Dagbladet'
 The Purple Rose of Cairo
 Smiles of a Summer's Night
 Amarcord
 Les 400 coups
 Saturday Night and Sunday
 Morning
 Raise the Red Lantern
 Notorious
 Witness
 A Night at the Opera
 Monty Python's The Meaning
 of Life

Subhash Ghai
 India
 Amadeus
 Dances with Wolves
 Doctor Zhivago
 Gandhi
 The Godfather Part III
 The Last Emperor
 Mother India
 (Khan Mehboob)
 Pather Panchali
 Pretty Woman
 The Sound of Music

John Gillett
 United Kingdom
 Avant!l
 L'avventura
 Charulata
 The House on Trubnaya
 Square (Boris Barnet)
 Late Spring
 The Life and Death of Colonel
 Blimp
 Our Hospitality
 La Règle du jeu
 Sansho Dayu
 They Were Expendable

Goran Gocić
 Belgrade
 Napoléon (Abel Gance)
 La Règle du jeu
 Les Enfants terribles
 Ugetsu Monogatari
 Un condamné à mort s'est
 échappé
 Andrei Rublev
 Chelsea Girls
 Two or Three Things I Know
 About Her
 The Phantom of Liberty
 Salò

Giovanni Grazzini
 Italy
 Battleship Potemkin
 Citizen Kane
 The Circus (Chaplin)
 8½
 2001: A Space Odyssey
 Paisà
 Andrei Rublev
 Prospero's Books
 Decalogue
 Tale of the Wind
 (Joris Ivens)

José Luis Guarner
 Spain, 'La Vanguardia'/
 'Fotogramas'
 Citizen Kane
 The Crowd
 The General
 Rear Window
 La Règle du jeu
 The Searchers
 Singin' in the Rain
 Sunrise
 Journey to Italy
 Yang Kwei Fei (Mizoguchi)

Prauke Hanck
 Germany, 'Die Welt'/
 'Abendzeitung'
 All About Eve
 Citizen Kane
 The Conformist
 A Short Film About Killing
 Los olvidados
 Mean Streets
 Seven Samurai
 Shadows
 Singin' in the Rain
 To Be or Not to Be (Lubitsch)

John Harkness
 Canada
 La Règle du jeu
 Vertigo
 Touch of Evil
 Pierrot le fou
 Sisters of the Gion
 (Mizoguchi)
 Persona
 The Godfather &
 The Godfather Part II
 The Searchers
 Dead Ringers
 In a Year with 13 Moons
 (Fassbinder)
 Intentions of Murder
 (Imamura)
 W. H. Auden once said,
 "Pleasure is not an
 infallible guide, but is
 the least fallible". This is
 how I think today. The
 list might be different
 next week...

J. Hoberman
 USA, 'The Village Voice'
 Fantômas (Feuillade)
 God's Stepchildren
 (Oscar Micheaux)
 Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du
 Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles
 (Chantal Akerman)
 The Lonedale Operator
 (Griffith)
 The Man with a Movie
 Camera
 Pather Panchali
 Rose Hobart
 (Joseph Cornell)
 Scenes from Under Childhood
 (Stan Brakhage)
 Two or Three Things I Know
 About Her
 Vertigo

Rashid Irani
 India,
 'The Times of India'
 Signs of Life (Herzog)
 An Autumn Afternoon
 Stromboli
 Limelight
 Tale of the Wind
 (Joris Ivens)
 La Règle du jeu
 The World of Apu
 L'Argent
 The Magnificent Ambersons
 Vivre sa vie
 None of these films
 would have been
 accessible without the
 (once flourishing) film
 societies/cultural
 organisations, and
 without these films my
 life wouldn't quite be the
 same...

Kevin Jackson
 United Kingdom,
 'The Independent'
 Apocalypse Now
 The Lady Eve
 Mirror
 Une partie de campagne
 Lawrence of Arabia
 Journey to Italy
 Nashville
 True Stories
 Taxi Driver
 A Diary for Timothy
 This is an appalling task,
 so I have funk'd it in two
 ways: (a) by picking ten
 major genres, then
 choosing a favourite film
 from each (hence no
 attempt at proportional
 representation by decade,
 nation, directorial
 gender and so on, and
 certainly no attempt at
 suggesting a canon); and
 (b) by then fudging the
 categories quite
 shamelessly. The
 resulting list dismays
 me somewhat even so,
 but stet...

Gilles Jacob
 France, Cannes
 International Film
 Festival
 Bringing Up Baby
 Dr. Strangelove
 Duck Soup
 It Happened One Night
 Love and Death
 Orchestra Rehearsal (Fellini)
 Shoulder Arms (Chaplin)
 Some Like It Hot
 The General
 To Be or Not to Be (Lubitsch)

Frederic R. Jameson
 USA, Duke University
 The Thief of Bagdad (Berger,
 Whelan, Powell)
 Duel in the Sun
 Touchez pas au grisbi
 (Jacques Becker)
 Barbarella
 Mr. Arkadin
 The Devil Strikes at Night
 (Robert Siodmak)
 High and Low
 Limelight
 Seconds
 A Wedding (Altman)
 I wish to avoid a
 canonical list, which in
 any case would simply
 reflect generational
 tastes, and therefore this
 is what I would propose...

Dragan Jelčić
 Belgrade, 'Vreme'
 Gentlemen Prefer Blondes
 They Died with Their Boots
 On (Walsh)
 Out of the Past
 The Barkleys of Broadway
 (Charles Walters)
 Written on the Wind
 The War of the Worlds
 (Byron Haskin)
 Annelie (Josef von Baky)
 The Big Risk
 (Claude Sautet)
 The Vampire Lovers
 (Roy Ward Baker)
 Companeros!
 (Sergio Corbucci)

Jeon Yang-June
 South Korea,
 'Film Language'
 Aguirre, Wrath of God
 The Exterminating Angel
 Germany, Year Zero
 Kings of the Road
 The Travelling Players
 Peasants of the Second
 Fortress
 (Ogawa Shinsuke)
 The Round-Up (Jancsó)
 The Time to Live and the
 Time to Die
 (Hou Xiaoxian)
 Tout va bien
 Mirror



Thierry Jousse France, 'Cahiers du cinéma' <i>Madame de...</i> <i>Some Came Running</i> <i>An Affair to Remember</i> (Leo McCarey) <i>Pierrot le fou</i> <i>Colorado Territory</i> (Walsh) <i>Vertigo</i> <i>The Searchers</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>City Girl</i> <i>Once Upon a Time in America</i>	Andreas Kilb Germany, 'Die Zeit' <i>A bout de souffle</i> <i>Accattone</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Greed</i> <i>The Leopard</i> <i>Rashomon</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>Stalker</i> <i>Taxi Driver</i> <i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> I've selected each of these films because it has shown me an aspect of cinematography without which my perception of movies would be different...	André S. Labarthe France, Institut National de l'Audiovisuel <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>L'Age d'or</i> <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>M. Hulot's Holiday</i> <i>Journey to Italy</i> <i>Greed</i> <i>Diary of a Country Priest</i> <i>Les Carabiniers</i> <i>Faces</i> (Cassavetes) <i>Touch of Evil</i>	Tony Macklin USA, University of Dayton <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Vertigo</i> <i>Once Upon a Time in the West</i> <i>The Searchers</i> <i>The Gold Rush</i> <i>La dolce vita</i> <i>Jules et Jim</i> <i>The Ballad of Cable Hogue</i> <i>The Godfather Part II</i> <i>The Maltese Falcon</i>	Iqbal Masud India, 'Indian Express' <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Stalker</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>L'Atalante</i> <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>Aparajito</i> <i>The Third Man</i> <i>The Dead</i> <i>Kiss of the Spider Woman</i>	Kobena Mercer United Kingdom/USA, University of California <i>Performance</i> <i>Looking for Langston</i> (Isaac Julien) <i>Psycho</i> <i>The Man Who Fell to Earth</i> <i>Un Chant d'amour</i> <i>Aliens</i> <i>The Terminator</i> <i>Chelsea Girls</i> <i>Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?</i> <i>Wayne's World</i>
Philip Kemp United Kingdom <i>Charulata</i> <i>Le Crime de Monsieur Lange</i> <i>M</i> <i>Night Moves</i> (Penn) <i>The Philadelphia Story</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>Ride the High Country</i> <i>The Sweet Smell of Success</i> <i>The Third Man</i> <i>Yojimbo</i>	Naum Kleiman Russia, Cinema Museum, Moscow What makes a film great is the idea, and this, I consider, is adequately comprehended only by watching a trilogy. Griffith: <i>Intolerance/Broken Blossoms/Orphans of the Storm</i> Flaherty: <i>Nanook of the North/Man of Aran/Louisiana Story</i> Chaplin: <i>The Gold Rush/City Lights/Limelight</i> Dreyer: <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc/Day of Wrath/Ordet</i> Eisenstein: <i>Strike/Battleship Potemkin/October</i> Vigo: <i>A Propos de Nice/Zéro de conduite/L'Atalante</i> Rossellini: <i>Rome, Open City/Paisà/Germany, Year Zero</i> Ray: <i>Pather Panchali/Aparajito/The World of Apu</i> Ozu: <i>Tokyo Story/Late Spring/Late Autumn</i> Resnais: <i>Muriel/Hiroshima mon amour/La Guerre est finie</i>	John Francis Lane United Kingdom/Italy <i>Accattone</i> <i>L'avventura</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>La dolce vita</i> <i>Les Enfants du paradis</i> <i>Henry V</i> (Olivier) <i>Orphée</i> <i>Some Like It Hot</i> <i>La terra trema</i> <i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i>	Derek Malcolm United Kingdom, 'The Guardian' <i>The Life of Oharu</i> <i>Madame de...</i> <i>Rio Bravo</i> <i>The Music Room</i> <i>Touch of Evil</i> <i>El</i> <i>The Seventh Seal</i> <i>Sons of the Desert</i> (William S. Seiter) <i>Barren Lives</i> (Nelson Pereira dos Santos) <i>Tokyo Story</i> Better to list the films you love than those you think ought to be loved as the best, since any such list tells as much about you as the films themselves...	Andy Medhurst United Kingdom, University of Sussex <i>Brief Encounter</i> <i>Come Back to the 5 & Dime</i> <i>Jimmy Dean</i> <i>Holiday</i> (Cukor) <i>Le Crime de Monsieur Lange</i> <i>Meet Me In St. Louis</i> <i>Mildred Pierce</i> <i>Near Dark</i> <i>Peeping Tom</i> <i>Vertigo</i> <i>Way Down East</i> (Griffith)	Lino Micciché Italy, SNCCI <i>Ivan the Terrible</i> Germany, <i>Year Zero</i> <i>La terra trema</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>The Apu trilogy</i> <i>L'avventura</i> <i>8½</i> <i>Andrei Rublev</i> <i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> <i>The Travelling Players</i>
Peter Keough USA, 'The Boston Phoenix' <i>The Searchers</i> <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> <i>King Kong</i> <i>The General</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Pather Panchali</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>Raging Bull</i> <i>Strike</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i>	Gertrud Koch Germany <i>Queen Kelly</i> <i>Some Like It Hot</i> <i>Sans lendemain</i> (Ophüls) <i>North by Northwest</i> <i>Judex</i> (Feuillade) <i>Judex</i> (Franju) <i>The Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz</i> <i>Intolerance</i> <i>Cat People</i> (Jacques Tourneur) <i>Nosferatu</i> (Murnau)	Li Cheuk-to Hong Kong, 'Hong Kong Economic Daily' <i>L'Année dernière à Marienbad</i> <i>L'avventura</i> <i>Late Spring</i> <i>Two or Three Things I Know About Her</i> <i>Mirror</i> <i>Pather Panchali</i> <i>The Time to Live and the Time to Die</i> (Hou Xiaoxian) <i>Vertigo</i> <i>Spring in a Small Town</i> (Fei Mu) <i>Festival Moon</i> (Zhu Shilin)	Vittorio Martinelli Italy <i>Les Enfants du paradis</i> <i>The Last Laugh</i> <i>The Crowd</i> <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> <i>City Lights</i> <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>Bellissima</i> (Visconti) <i>Assunta spina</i> (Gustavo Serena) <i>Greed</i> <i>Lady Windermere's Fan</i> (Lubitsch)	David Meeker United Kingdom, National Film Archive <i>Les Vampires</i> <i>Love Me Tonight</i> <i>Listen To Britain</i> <i>Laura</i> <i>My Darling Clementine</i> <i>Red River</i> <i>Gun Crazy</i> <i>Bob le flambeur</i> <i>Lola Montès</i> (Ophüls) <i>Marnie</i>	Annette Michelson USA, 'October' <i>L'Argent</i> <i>The Art of Vision</i> <i>Hapax Legomena</i> (Hollis Frampton) <i>Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles</i> <i>The Man with a Movie Camera</i> <i>October</i> <i>Tih Minh</i> (Feuillade) <i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> <i>Wavelength</i> (Michael Snow) <i>Vivre sa vie</i> Among the many different axes which structure the many possible histories of cinema, I have chosen that of the formally and discursively significant intervention...
Pervais Khan United Kingdom <i>Star Under the Cover of Cloud</i> (Ritwik Ghatak) <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Meshes of the Afternoon</i> <i>My Childhood & My Ain Folk</i> (Bill Douglas) <i>Ava & Gabriel, A Love Story</i> (Felix de Rooy) <i>Weekend</i> <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> <i>Rue Cases Nègres</i> <i>Mirror</i> <i>Man of Aran</i> (Robert Flaherty)	George Khleifi Jerusalem <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> <i>The Man with a Movie Camera</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> <i>8½</i> <i>Hiroshima mon amour</i> <i>A bout de souffle</i> <i>Moses</i> (Straub/Huillet) <i>Kagemusha</i> <i>Wedding in Galilee</i> (Michel Khleifi)	Colin MacCabe United Kingdom, BFI <i>Passion</i> <i>Le Mépris</i> <i>Paisà</i> <i>Ai No Corrida</i> <i>Blade Runner</i> Terence Davies' trilogy (<i>Distant Voices, Still Lives; The Long Day Closes</i>) <i>Performance</i> <i>Chinatown</i> <i>Get Carter</i> <i>Carry On...Up the Khyber/Carry on Cleo</i>	A. Masson France <i>L'Atalante</i> <i>Broken Blossoms</i> <i>La Grande illusion</i> <i>The Music Room</i> <i>Pickpocket</i> <i>Rio Bravo</i> <i>Singin' in the Rain</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>Ugetsu Monogatari</i> <i>Wings of Desire</i>	Jonas Mekas USA, Anthology Film Archives <i>The Art of Vision</i> (Stan Brakhage) <i>The Birth of a Nation</i> <i>Le Sang d'un poète</i> <i>Fireworks</i> <i>Films of Brothers</i> <i>Lumière</i> <i>The Man with a Movie Camera</i> <i>Films of Georges Méliès</i> <i>Nanook of the North</i> <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> <i>Unsere Afrikareise</i> (Peter Kubelka)	Khalid Mohamed India, 'The Times of India' <i>L'Argent</i> <i>The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant</i> <i>Dodes'ka-den</i> (Kurosawa) <i>Une femme douce</i> (Bresson) <i>Landscape in the Mist</i> (Angelopoulos) <i>Mughal-e-Atam</i> <i>Pather Panchali</i> <i>Pierrot le fou</i> <i>Rear Window</i> <i>Some Like It Hot</i> The selection is unashamedly sentimental, films which I grew up on, laughed and cried with in the dark of the auditorium...
Fernando Mendez-Leite Spain <i>Seven Chances</i> (Keaton) <i>Sunrise</i> <i>My Darling Clementine</i> <i>To Have and Have Not</i> <i>Madame de...</i> <i>Vertigo</i> <i>The Vanishing Corporal</i> (Renoir) <i>Winter Light</i> <i>Ma nuit chez Maud</i> <i>The Spirit of the Beehive</i> (Victor Erice)					

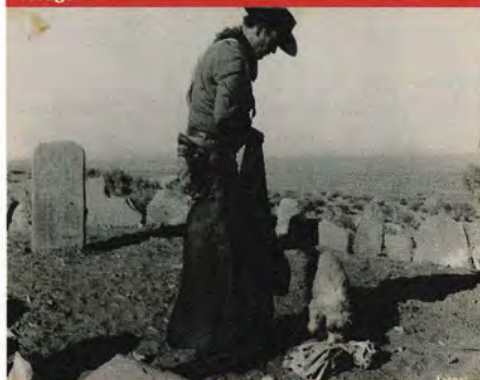




'Tokyo Story'



'Vertigo'



'The Searchers'



'Pather Panchali'



'2001: A Space Odyssey'

Morando Morandini

Italy, 'Il Giorno'

The General
The Passion of Joan of Arc
L'Atalante
Les Enfants du paradis
Ugetsu Monogatari
Hiroshima mon amour
 8½
Andrei Rublev
Nashville
Fanny and Alexander

Laura Mulvey

United Kingdom

Un chien andalou
La signora di tutti
Modern Times
Citizen Kane
Gentlemen Prefer Blondes
Imitation of Life (Sirk)
Vivre sa vie
Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles
Ceddo
Yellow Earth (Chen Kaige)

Giuliana Muscio

Italy, University of Padua

Citizen Kane
Battleship Potemkin
The Godfather Part II
 8½
Ossessione
Paisà
Rio Bravo
The Searchers
Sunset Boulevard
Trouble in Paradise

Nakano Rie

Japan

Wild Strawberries
La strada
Land Without Bread
Full Metal Jacket
I Am Furious, Yellow
 (Kidlat Tahimik)
100 Children Waiting for a Train
The Times of Harvey Milk
Humanity and Paper
Balloons
 (Yamanaka Sadao)
Kusatori Zoshi
 (Fukuda Katsuhiko)
The Suspended Step of the Stork (Angelopoulos)

Roberto Nepoti

Italy

The Passion of Joan of Arc
Journey to Italy
Citizen Kane
Les Enfants du paradis
Andrei Rublev
Stagecoach
Pickpocket
Senso
Alexander Nevsky
Viridiana

Geoffrey Nowell-Smith

United Kingdom

An Autumn Afternoon
L'Eclisse
Gertrud
His Girl Friday
Letter from an Unknown Woman
Listen to Britain
The Man with a Movie Camera
The Pirate (Minnelli)
Sansho Dayu
Two or Three Things I Know About Her
 As you can see, no Hitchcock, no Welles, no Rossellini, no Renoir even. Certainly no Griffith or Eisenstein. Regretfully nothing recent. Think of it as a football team, no old crocks but no flash kids either, just a bunch of experienced old hands who can play anywhere...

Okubu Kenichi

Japan

The General
L'Age d'or
L'Atalante
Humanity and Paper
Balloons
Citizen Kane
Meshe of the Afternoon
Les Enfants du paradis
Seven Samurai
Antonio Das Mortes
 (Glauber Rocha)
Magino Village: A Tale
 (Ogawa Shinsuke)

Nebojsa Pajkić

Belgrade

Abraham Lincoln (Griffith)
Conan the Barbarian
 (Milius)
The Searchers
Rebecca
Letter from an Unknown Woman
Hitler, a Film from Germany
Pickpocket
Gertrud
Hatari!
Friedemann Bach
 (Traugott Müller)

Tomás Perez Turrent

Mexico

Intolerance
Sherlock Jr.
The Wind
L'Age d'or
Citizen Kane
El
Singin' in the Rain
Vivre sa vie
Black God, White Devil
Once Upon a Time in America

Andrei Plakhov

Russia

L'Atalante
The Damned (Visconti)
Citizen Kane
L'Eclisse
Mirror
Ashes and Diamonds
La Règle du jeu
Wild Strawberries
Tristana
A Woman of Paris (Chaplin)

John Powers

USA, 'L.A. Weekly'

An Autumn Afternoon
L'Atalante
Belle de jour
City Lights
The Godfather Part II
His Girl Friday
Masculin-féminin
The Passenger
Rear Window
La Règle du jeu

Noel Purdon

Australia, 'The Adelaide Review'

The Player
The Phantom of Liberty
Alexander Nevsky
Les Yeux sans visage
 (Franju)
Vertigo
Spione
Arabian Nights (Pasolini)
Black Narcissus
The Music Room
Yellow Sky
 (William Wellman)

Terrence Rafferty

USA, 'New Yorker'

La Règle du jeu
Charulata
L'Atalante
McCabe and Mrs. Miller
The Navigator (Keaton)
The Night of the Hunter
Sans soleil
Seven Samurai
Sunrise
The Wild Bunch

Ashish Rajadhyaksha

India

Esther (Amos Gitai)
Harvest Years 3000
 (Haile Gerima)
Memories of Underdevelopment
Passion
Ran
So That You Can Live
 (Cinema Action)
Tangos: The Exile of Gardel
 (Fernando Solanas)
Tarang (Kumar Shahani)
A River called Titash
 (Ritwik Ghatak)

Yellow Earth

This list follows my decision to include films made only from the late 60s on. It assumes that the old masters, Eisenstein, Welles, Renoir and the rest, have done enough for cinema without being invoked yet again to solve the current crises of the tradition they founded. The problem is a contemporary one, and the films mentioned represent a heroic struggle to keep that tradition alive...

Tony Rayns

United Kingdom

The Straits of Love and Hate
 (Mizoguchi)
The New Morning of Billy The Kid
 (Yamakawa Naoto)
Black Narcissus
Die Geburt der Nation
 (Klaus Wyborny)
King of the Children
 (Chen Kaige)
The Colour of Pomegranates
Querelle
The Scarlet Empress
Spring in a Small Town
 (Fei Mu)
Heart, Beating in the Dark
 (Nagasaki Shunichi)

Vieri Razzini

Italy, RAI TV 3

2001: A Space Odyssey
Sunset Boulevard
To Be or Not To Be
 (Lubitsch)
Citizen Kane
Nashville
La dolce vita
The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie
Cries and Whispers
Bringing Up Baby
Germany, Year Zero

Bérénice Reynaud USA/'Libération' <i>Passion</i> <i>A nos amours</i> <i>Toute une nuit</i> <i>Yellow Earth</i> <i>Yeelen</i> <i>A City of Sadness</i> (Hou Xiaoxian) <i>Decalogue</i> <i>Black Rain</i> (Imamura Shohei) <i>Taiga</i> (Ulrike Ottinger) <i>A Brighter Summer Day</i> (Edward Yang)	Donald Richie Japan <i>Moana</i> (Flaherty) <i>The General</i> <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>Seven Samurai</i> <i>L'avventura</i> <i>Au hasard Balthazar</i> <i>Stalker</i>	Chris Rodley United Kingdom, Lucida Productions <i>Last Tango in Paris</i> <i>Once Upon a Time in the West</i> <i>Peeping Tom</i> <i>Performance</i> <i>Pickpocket</i> <i>Raging Bull</i> <i>Le Samourai</i> (Melville) <i>The Searchers</i> <i>Touch of Evil</i> <i>Vertigo</i>	Andrew Sarris USA, Columbia University <i>Madame de...</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>Ugetsu Monogatari</i> <i>The Searchers</i> <i>Shadow of a Doubt</i> <i>Sunrise</i> <i>The Shop Around the Corner</i> (Lubitsch) <i>Sunset Boulevard</i> <i>Belle de jour</i> <i>Steamboat Bill Jr.</i>	Meir Schnitzer Israel, 'Ha'aretz' <i>Alice in the Cities</i> <i>Andrei Rublev</i> <i>Blade Runner</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Husbands</i> <i>Ikiru</i> 8½ <i>Shoah</i> <i>The Sorrow and the Pity</i> (Marcel Ophüls) <i>Strike</i>	Agustin L. Sotto Philippines, C. C. P. Center for Film <i>Wedding March</i> (Von Stroheim) <i>Sunrise</i> <i>October</i> <i>Gion Festival</i> (Mizoguchi) <i>Pursued</i> (Walsh) <i>Forty-eight Hours</i> (Gerardo de Leon) <i>The Tiger of Eschnapur</i> <i>The Music Room</i> <i>Amarcord</i> <i>Kings of the Road</i>
Esteve Rimbau Spain <i>The Crowd</i> <i>Un chien andalou</i> <i>City Lights</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Ivan the Terrible</i> <i>Ordet</i> <i>The Searchers</i> <i>A bout de souffle</i> 2001: A Space Odyssey <i>Fanny and Alexander</i> (TV version)	Pierre Rissient France <i>Renoir</i> Mizoguchi Losey Lang Walsh Ida Lupino Lino Brocka Hanns Schwarz and Max Ophüls Leo McCarey and Gregory La Cava Urban Gad and the early Cecil B. DeMille Can I mention the directors without whom I could not see films, and should I say life, in the same way?	Jonathan Rosenbaum USA, 'Chicago Reader' <i>Au hasard Balthazar</i> <i>Chimes at Midnight</i> <i>Foolish Wives</i> <i>Gentlemen Prefer Blondes</i> <i>Monsieur Verdoux</i> <i>Ordet</i> <i>Out I: Noli me tangere</i> (Rivette) <i>Playtime</i> <i>Stalker</i> <i>Tih Minh</i>	Sato Tadao Japan <i>A Woman of Paris</i> <i>A Diary of Chuji's Travels</i> (Ito Daisuke) <i>The Life of Oharu</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>Ordet</i> <i>Wild Strawberries</i> <i>The Bogey Man</i> (G. Aravindan) <i>Mandala</i> (Im Kwon-Taek) <i>Red Sorghum</i> (Zhang Yimou) <i>Banana Paradise</i> (Wang Tong)	Wolfram Schütte Germany, 'Frankfurter Rundschau' <i>Zelig</i> <i>The Travelling Players</i> <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>Berlin Alexanderplatz</i> <i>Weekend</i> <i>M</i> <i>Shoah</i> <i>To Be or Not to Be</i> <i>Stalker</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> The list of the ten best films is an international Bingo. Therefore I participate in it mentioning those films which have impressed me as first or newly seen during the last ten years...	Dusan Stojanovic Belgrade, 'Filmoloske Sveske' <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>Ugetsu Monogatari</i> <i>Pierrot le fou</i> <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> <i>The Third Man</i> 2001: A Space Odyssey <i>The Wind</i> (Sjöström) <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> <i>Un chien andalou</i>
B. Ruby Rich USA <i>Anything by Jane</i> <i>Campion</i> <i>Anything by Chris</i> Marker <i>Daisies</i> (Vera Chytilová) <i>Memories of</i> <i>Underdevelopment</i> <i>Chronique d'un été</i> (Jean Rouch) <i>Looking for Langston</i> <i>Film About a Woman Who...</i> (Yvonne Rainer) <i>Thelma & Louise</i> <i>The Hour of the Star</i> (Suzana Amaral) Tie for modern spectacle category: Derek Jarman's <i>Edward II</i> and Sally Potter's <i>Orlando</i>	David Robinson United Kingdom <i>Fantômas</i> <i>The Kid</i> <i>Sunrise</i> <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i> <i>Stagecoach</i> <i>Listen to Britain</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>Pather Panchali</i> <i>Fanny and Alexander</i> <i>Strictly Ballroom</i> In fact I came up with a final twenty-one films I could not do without. I tried weeding them out by limiting myself to one from each decade; but found the 20s, 30s and 50s absolutely demanded two each; so I had to sacrifice the 60s and 70s. They weren't all that good after all...	Tom Ryan Australia, 'The Sunday Age' <i>The Awful Truth</i> (Leo McCarey) <i>Blow Out</i> <i>La Femme infidèle</i> <i>In a Lonely Place</i> <i>Letter from an Unknown Woman</i> <i>Madame de...</i> <i>Make Way for Tomorrow</i> (Leo McCarey) <i>Les Parapluies de Cherbourg</i> <i>To Have and Have Not</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i>	Richard Schickel USA, 'Time' <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Double Indemnity</i> <i>The Good, the Bad and the Ugly</i> <i>The Maltese Falcon</i> <i>On the Waterfront</i> <i>Out of the Past</i> <i>Sullivan's Travels</i> <i>They Were Expendable</i> <i>Trouble in Paradise</i> <i>White Heat</i> Ten best? No, just ten movies that lately have been playing very successfully in my favourite repertory theatre - the one in my head...	Zoran Sinobad Belgrade, Yugoslav Film Archive <i>Céline and Julie Go Boating</i> <i>The Birth of a Nation</i> <i>The Cheat</i> (Cecil B. DeMille) <i>Greed</i> <i>The Searchers</i> <i>Way Down East</i> (Griffith) <i>Black Narcissus</i> <i>M. Hulot's Holiday</i> <i>Shadow of a Doubt</i> <i>Le Signe du lion</i> (Rohmer)	Rod Stoneman United Kingdom, Channel 4 <i>Tom, Tom the Piper's Son</i> <i>They Live by Night</i> <i>Pierrot le fou</i> <i>Performance</i> <i>Fellini-Satyricon</i> <i>Ai No Corrida</i> <i>Wend Kuuni</i> (Gaston Kaboré) T.G. <i>Psychic Rally in Heaven</i> (Derek Jarman) <i>Passion</i> <i>The Player</i>
		Nicolas Saada France, 'Cahiers du cinéma' <i>Touch of Evil</i> <i>Singin' in the Rain</i> <i>The Music Room</i> <i>The Testament of Dr. Mabuse</i> <i>The 39 Steps</i> <i>City Lights</i> <i>Pickpocket</i> <i>The Searchers</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>L'Atalante</i>			David Stratton Australia <i>Greed</i> <i>The General</i> <i>La Grande illusion</i> <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Letter from an Unknown Woman</i> <i>Ikiru</i> <i>Singin' in the Rain</i> <i>A bout de souffle</i> <i>Distant Voices, Still Lives</i>

THE SIGHT AND SOUND TOP 10 1952-1982

1952	1962
Bicycle Thieves (De Sica) 1949	Citizen Kane (Welles) 1941
City Lights (Chaplin) 1930	L'avventura (Antonioni) 1960
The Gold Rush (Chaplin) 1925	La Règle du jeu (Renoir) 1939
Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein) 1925	Greed (Von Stroheim) 1924
Intolerance (Griffith) 1916	Ugetsu Monogatari (Mizoguchi) 1953
Louisiana Story (Flaherty) 1947	Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein) 1925
Greed (Von Stroheim) 1924	Bicycle Thieves (De Sica) 1949
Le Jour se lève (Carné) 1939	Ivan the Terrible (Eisenstein) 1943-46
The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer) 1928	La terra trema (Visconti) 1948
Brief Encounter (Lean) 1945	L'Atalante (Vigo) 1934
Le Million (Clair) 1930	
La Règle du jeu (Renoir) 1939	

Philip Strick United Kingdom <i>L'avventura</i> <i>Black Narcissus</i> <i>Boudu Saved from Drowning</i> <i>The Dead</i> <i>Meet Me in St. Louis</i> <i>The Searchers</i> <i>Solaris</i> 2001: A Space Odyssey <i>Vertigo</i> <i>Wild Strawberries</i>	Togawa Naoki Japan <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>City Lights</i> <i>La Grande illusion</i> <i>Seven Samurai</i> <i>Pather Panchali</i> <i>Kanal (Wajda)</i> <i>The Bridge on the River Kwai</i> <i>Wild Strawberries</i> 2001: A Space Odyssey <i>Death in Venice</i>	Udagawa Koyo Japan <i>The Ballad of Cable Hogue</i> <i>The Fate of Lee Khan (King Hu)</i> <i>Hong Kong 1941 (Leong Po-Chih)</i> <i>My Darling Clementine</i> <i>Ordet</i> <i>Orphans of the Storm</i> <i>The Quiet Man</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>Seven Chances</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i>	Sheila Whitaker United Kingdom, London Film Festival <i>The Big Sleep</i> <i>Bringing Up Baby</i> <i>To Be or Not to Be (Lubitsch)</i> <i>The Conformist</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>Seven Samurai</i> <i>North by Northwest</i> <i>The Leopard</i> <i>Some Like It Hot</i> <i>Pather Panchali</i> This selection comprises my Desert Island movies, but it still means that I would have to live without the song and dance of Fred Astaire (Band Wagon?), Laurel and Hardy, a Western and The Best Years of Our Lives and The Tree of Wooden Clogs and, and... I also have the feeling that in a year or two <i>Thelma & Louise</i> may have to get on to the list somehow, but in the meantime I'll laugh and cry with these...	Judith Williamson United Kingdom <i>L'Atalante</i> <i>Au hasard Balthazar</i> <i>La dolce vita</i> <i>Earth</i> <i>Ikiru</i> <i>My Darling Clementine</i> <i>Raging Bull</i> <i>Le Silence de la mer (Melville)</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>The Wind</i> Deciding the ten 'best' is impossible, so these are ten films I'm especially fond of...	Robin Wood United Kingdom/Canada <i>Celine and Julie Go Boating</i> <i>Heaven's Gate (full version)</i> <i>Letter from an Unknown Woman</i> <i>Life Classes (William MacGillivray)</i> <i>My Love Has Been Burning (Mizoguchi)</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>Rio Bravo</i> <i>The Scarlet Empress</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>Vertigo</i>
Amy Taubin USA <i>A Woman Alone (Agnieszka Holland)</i> <i>Dead Ringers</i> <i>Pickpocket</i> <i>Raging Bull</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>Shoah</i> <i>Two or Three Things I Know About Her</i> 2001: A Space Odyssey <i>Vertigo</i> <i>Wavelength (Michael Snow)</i>	Mirito Torreiro Spain <i>A bout de souffle</i> <i>L'Atalante</i> <i>L'avventura</i> <i>Chimes at Midnight</i> <i>Gertrud</i> <i>The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>Wild Strawberries</i> <i>Ugetsu Monogatari</i> <i>Viridiana</i>	Aruna Vasudev India, 'Cinemaya' <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> <i>La notte</i> <i>The Seventh Seal</i> <i>Jules et Jim</i> <i>The Music Room</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>Pierrot le fou</i> <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>Why Did Bodhi-Dharma Leave for the East?</i>	Arund White USA, 'The City Sun' <i>Lola</i> <i>The Magnificent Ambersons</i> <i>Nashville</i> <i>Weekend</i> <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>L'avventura</i> <i>Distant Voices, Still Lives</i> <i>The Color Purple</i> <i>Intolerance</i> <i>Jules et Jim</i>	Peter Wollen United Kingdom/USA, UCLA <i>Metropolis</i> <i>The Docks of New York (Sternberg)</i> <i>L'Age d'or</i> <i>La signora di tutti</i> <i>The Red Shoes</i> <i>The Night of the Hunter</i> <i>Chronique d'un été</i> <i>Pakeezah (Kamal Amrohi)</i> <i>Joan of Arc of Mongolia (Ulrike Ottinger)</i> <i>Latino Bar (Paul Leduc)</i> I am not sure whether the extraordinary series of video-letters exchanged between Terayama Shuji and Tanikawa Shuntaro in 1982-83 could somehow count as film. They certainly count as a masterpiece. And, of course, I know that <i>La Règle du jeu</i> , <i>Citizen Kane</i> and <i>Singin' in the Rain</i> are really the greatest films ever made, but they did already have their turn last time, didn't they?	Atif Yilmaz Turkey <i>Last Exit to Brooklyn</i> <i>Ran</i> <i>Amadeus</i> <i>Kiss of the Spider Woman</i> <i>A Short Film About Love</i> <i>The Official Version (Luis Puenzo)</i> <i>Sunday in the Country</i> <i>Sophie's Choice</i> <i>Hope and Glory</i> <i>Passione d'amore (Ettore Scola)</i>
Stephen Teo Hong Kong/Australia <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Spring in a Small Town</i> <i>Wagonmaster</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>Vertigo</i> <i>L'avventura</i> <i>Charulata</i> <i>Yellow Earth</i> <i>Taipei Story (Edward Yang)</i>	Maya Turovskaya Russia <i>Intolerance</i> <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>City Lights</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>La Grande illusion</i> <i>La terra trema</i> <i>Rashomon</i> <i>Andrei Rublev</i> <i>The Marriage of Maria Braun</i>	Sanjeev Verma India, 'The Sunday Observer' <i>The Apu trilogy</i> <i>Brief Encounter</i> <i>Charulata</i> <i>Madame de...</i> <i>The Leopard</i> <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> <i>Monsieur Verdoux</i> <i>Night and Fog (Resnais)</i> <i>Strangers on a Train</i> <i>The Third Man</i>	Armond White USA, 'The City Sun' <i>Lola</i> <i>The Magnificent Ambersons</i> <i>Nashville</i> <i>Weekend</i> <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>L'avventura</i> <i>Distant Voices, Still Lives</i> <i>The Color Purple</i> <i>Intolerance</i> <i>Jules et Jim</i>	Evan Williams Australia, 'The Australian' <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> <i>Casablanca</i> <i>A Matter of Life and Death</i> <i>La Grande illusion</i> <i>The Seventh Seal</i> <i>Vertigo</i> 2001: A Space Odyssey <i>Singin' in the Rain</i> <i>Andrei Rublev</i>	
David Thompson United Kingdom <i>L'Atalante</i> <i>Goto, Isle of Love (Borowczyk)</i> <i>Pandora's Box</i> <i>Raging Bull</i> <i>The Conformist</i> <i>Foolish Wives</i> <i>8½</i> <i>Lola</i> <i>Black Narcissus</i> <i>La Signora di tutti</i>	Dinko Tucaković Belgrade, 'Borba'/'Ekran' <i>The Searchers</i> <i>Pickup on South Street</i> <i>Vertigo</i> <i>Ninotchka</i> <i>Invasion of the Body Snatchers</i> <i>Imitation of Life</i> <i>Peeping Tom</i> <i>Gertrud</i> <i>Johnny Guitar</i> <i>This Gun for Hire</i>	Ginette Vincendeau United Kingdom, University of Warwick <i>La Bête humaine</i> <i>Desperately Seeking Susan</i> <i>Germany, Pale Mother (Helma Sanders-Brahms)</i> <i>Imitation of Life</i> <i>Le Mépris</i> <i>My Love Has Been Burning (Mizoguchi)</i> <i>Ossessione</i> <i>Out of the Past</i> <i>Rear Window</i> <i>Touchez pas au grisbi</i>			



1972

<i>Citizen Kane</i> (Welles) 1941	32
<i>La Règle du jeu</i> (Renoir) 1939	28
<i>Battleship Potemkin</i> (Eisenstein) 1925	16
<i>8½</i> (Fellini) 1963	15
<i>L'avventura</i> (Antonioni) 1960	12
<i>Persona</i> (Bergman) 1967	12
<i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> (Dreyer) 1928	11
<i>The General</i> (Keaton/Bruckman) 1927	10
<i>The Magnificent Ambersons</i> (Welles) 1942	10
<i>Ugetsu Monogatari</i> (Mizoguchi) 1953	9
<i>Wild Strawberries</i> (Bergman) 1957	9

1982

<i>Citizen Kane</i> (Welles) 1941	45
<i>La Règle du jeu</i> (Renoir) 1939	31
<i>Seven Samurai</i> (Kurosawa) 1954	15
<i>Singin' in the Rain</i> (Donen/Kelly) 1952	15
<i>8½</i> (Fellini) 1963	14
<i>Battleship Potemkin</i> (Eisenstein) 1925	13
<i>L'avventura</i> (Antonioni) 1960	12
<i>The Magnificent Ambersons</i> (Welles) 1942	12
<i>Vertigo</i> (Hitchcock) 1958	12
<i>The General</i> (Keaton/Bruckman) 1927	11
<i>The Searchers</i> (Ford) 1956	11

1982 TOP DIRECTORS

Orson Welles	71
Jean Renoir	51
Charles Chaplin	37
John Ford	34
Luis Buñuel	33
Akira Kurosawa	33
Federico Fellini	32
Alfred Hitchcock	32
Jean-Luc Godard	30
Buster Keaton	30

José Luis García Agraz

Mexico
Raging Bull
Touch of Evil
Ivan the Terrible
Apocalypse Now
The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance
Les 400 coups
A Night at the Opera
Paris, Texas
Kagemusha
Cul de sac

Pedro Almodóvar

Spain
Journey to Italy
Leave Her to Heaven
 (John M. Stahl)
Opening Night (Cassavetes)
The Apartment
To Be or Not to Be (Lubitsch)
El
La Règle du jeu
The Quiet Man
Out of the Past
North by Northwest

Omar Al-Qattan

United Kingdom/
 Palestine
Andrei Rublev
Passion
The Goddess (Satyajit Ray)
The Sound of Music
Salò
Pasolini's Trilogy of Life
 (The Decameron;
The Canterbury Tales;
Arabian Nights)
The Chase (Penn)
The Man with a Movie Camera
Of a Thousand Delights
 (Visconti)
The Witch (Pasolini)

Lindsay Anderson

United Kingdom
Listen to Britain
They Were Expendable
Tokyo Story
The Singing Lesson
Duck Soup
Zéro de conduite
Douce
 (Claude Autant-Lara)
Earth
Meet Me in St. Louis
L'Age d'or
 This is not a list of ten best, which is surely impossible. Nor is it in any particular order. It's really off the top of my head and there's no title in it that's new. A sort of self-portrait, I suppose, and just a rough sketch...

Denys Arcand

Canada
Battleship Potemkin
Seven Samurai
The Silence
8½
Une partie de campagne
Citizen Kane
The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie
My Darling Clementine
Il Generale Della Rovere
 (Rossellini)
Modern Times

Gillian Armstrong

Australia
Bicycle Thieves
Citizen Kane
Casablanca
The Godfather Part II
Jules et Jim
Gone with the Wind
La strada
Seven Samurai
The Seventh Seal
The Wizard of Oz

Pupi Avati

Italy
It's a Wonderful Life
La Grande illusion
8½
Ordet
Vampyr
Stagecoach
Paisà
Ivan's Childhood
Greed
The Cameraman
 (Buster Keaton)

Hector Babenco

Brazil
Viridiana
Rocco and His Brothers
L'Atalante
Black God, White Devil
 (Rocha)
Ashes and Diamonds
La dolce vita
Citizen Kane
Raging Bull
E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial
Last Tango in Paris

Maroun Bagdadi

Lebanon
The Barefoot Contessa
Citizen Kane
The Magnificent Ambersons
Mean Streets
The Passenger
Raging Bull
La Règle du jeu
Rio Bravo
Rome, Open City
Suddenly Last Summer

Peter von Bagh

Finland
Sumerki zhenskoi dushi
 (Evgeny Bauer)
Sunrise
The Wedding March
Frontier (Dovzhenko)
Make Way for Tomorrow
 (McCarey)
A Canterbury Tale
The Flowers of St. Francis
Casque d'or
Forty Guns
Sans soleil
 I regret the mysterious absence of the truly greatest films (*Intolerance*, *M*, *La Nuit du carrefour*, *L'Atalante*, *Life of Oharu*, *Bigger than Life*, *Vertigo*), but even more my failure to do justice to the neglected jewels like *The Long Gray Line*...

Jean-Jacques Beineix

France
2001: A Space Odyssey
Celine
 (Jean-Claude Brisseau)
In the White City
 (Alain Tanner)
Les Enfants du paradis
La Règle du jeu
L'Atalante
White Mane
 (Albert Lamorisse)
A Night at the Opera
Modern Times
Quai des Orfèvres

Stig Björkman

Sweden
Judex (Feuillade)
Miracle in Milan
Le Carrosse d'or
Journey to Italy
Touch of Evil
Vertigo
L'avventura
Pierrot le fou
Persona
Novecento

Sergei Bodrov

Russia
Modern Times
L'Atalante
La strada
Amarcord
Rashomon
Andrei Rublev
Husbands
My Friend Ivan Lapshin
Divorce, Italian Style
 (Germi)
The Godfather

Lizzie Borden

USA
The Conformist
Raging Bull
Last Tango in Paris
Touch of Evil
The Godfather & The Godfather Part II
Do the Right Thing
Midnight Cowboy
Sweetie
Klute
Blade Runner

Ferid Boughedir

Tunisia
Le Mépris
Amarcord
America America
City Lights
Paris, Texas
The Sparrow
 (Yusef Chahine)
Ceddo
Vertigo
Singin' in the Rain
Do You Remember Dolly Bell?
 (Kusturica)

Stan Brakhage

USA
Hart of London
 (John Chambers)
The Orpheus trilogy
 (Le Sang d'un poète;
Orphée; *Le Testament d'Orphée*)
Symphonie Diagonale
 (Viking Eggeling)
Ivan the Terrible
The Book of All the Dead
 (Bruce Elder)
Motion Painting
 (Oskar Fischinger)
The Poet's Veil
 (Peter Herwitz)
Go! Go! Go!
 (Marie Mencken)
The Adventures of the Exquisite Corpse
 (Andrew Noren)
Remains to Be Seen
 (Phil Solomon)

John Carpenter

USA
Only Angels Have Wings
Chimes at Midnight
Rio Bravo
The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie
Chinatown
Bringing Up Baby
The Searchers
The Exterminating Angel
Scarface (Hawks)
Vertigo

Jackie Chan

Hong Kong
Around the World in 80 Days
 (Michael Anderson)
Citizen Kane
Doctor Zhivago
Gone with the Wind
Midnight Run
 (Martin Brest)
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
Seven Samurai
The Bridge on the River Kwai
The Deer Hunter
The Godfather

Chen Kaige

China
Apocalypse Now
Citizen Kane
Les 400 coups
The Godfather
Intolerance
Lawrence of Arabia
Rashomon
Taxi Driver
Raging Bull
Yellow Earth

Michael Cimino

USA
The Leopard
They Were Expendable
Ludwig
The Searchers
La strada
Les Enfants du paradis
My Darling Clementine
La dolce vita
Rocco and His Brothers
Seven Samurai

Raoul Coutard

France
The Passion of Joan of Arc
Napoléon
Blow-Up
The Birth of a Nation
Voyage to the Moon
Intervista (Fellini)
Jules et Jim
A Lost Valley
Out of Africa

Alex Cox

United Kingdom
The Exterminating Angel
The Battle of Algiers
Citizen Kane
Come and See (Klimov)
Ikiru
King Kong
The Wages of Fear (Clouzot)
The Treasure of the Sierra Madre
2001: A Space Odyssey
Ran

Paul Cox

Australia
Persona
Mirror
The Silence
Tristana
Stalker
Viridiana
The Sacrifice
M. Hulot's Holiday
Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors (Paradzhanov)
Raise the Red Lantern

Wes Craven

USA
La Belle et la bête
Dr. Strangelove
El Topo
Forbidden Games (Clément)
Network
Psycho
Red River
Repulsion
The Tenant
The Treasure of the Sierra Madre

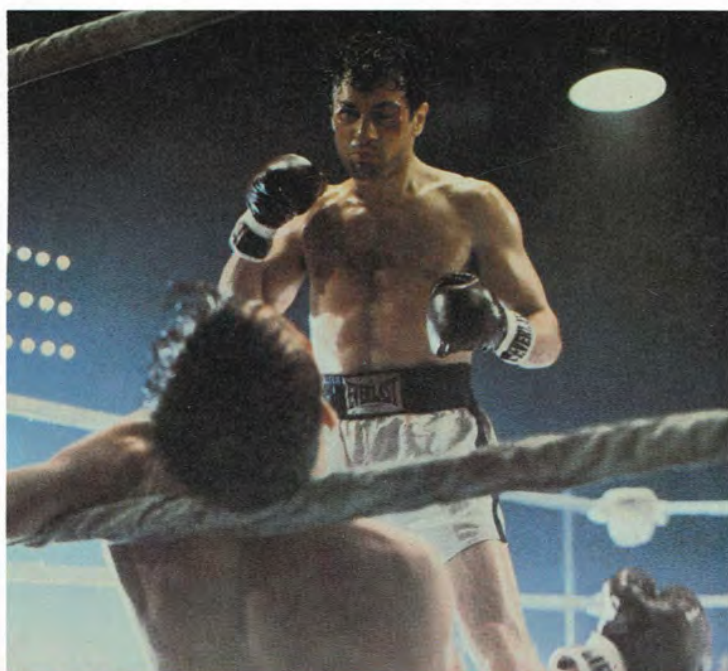
Terence Davies

United Kingdom
Singin' in the Rain
Young at Heart
Meet Me in St. Louis
The Night of the Hunter
Psycho
Cries and Whispers
The Magnificent Ambersons
Letter from an Unknown Woman
Kind Hearts and Coronets
The Ladykillers

Donna Deitch

USA
The Thin Blue Line
An Angel at My Table
Raging Bull
Citizen Kane
The Godfather
Los olvidados
28 Up (Michael Apted)
Les Enfants du paradis
Angelo My Love
 (Robert Duvall)
Badlands

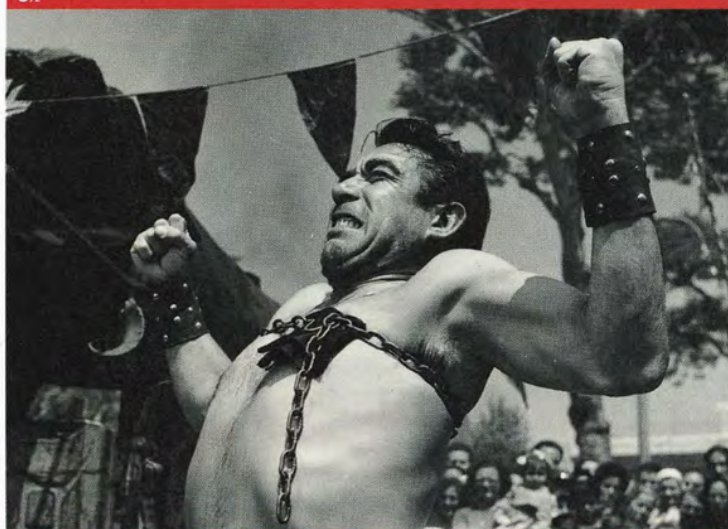




'Raging Bull'



'8½'



'La strada'

Jonathan Demme

USA

Antonio das Mortes
The Conformist
Do the Right Thing
Gertrud
King Kong
Kuragejima - Legends from
a Southern Island
(Imamura)
The Night of Counting
the Years (Abdel-salam)
Robin and Marian
(Richard Lester)
Shoot the Pianist
The Wizard of Oz

Claire Denis

France

Pickpocket
Home and the World
(Satyajit Ray)
Late Spring (Ozu)
No, or the Vain Glory of
Command
(Manoel de Oliveira)
Do the Right Thing
Fear Eats the Soul
Nouvelle Vague (Godard)
Germany, Year Zero
The Killing of a Chinese
Bookie
La notte

Tom DiCillo

USA

La strada
The Asphalt Jungle
Midnight Cowboy
The Conformist
La dolce vita
Weekend
Seven Samurai
The Wizard of Oz
Citizen Kane
Aguirre, Wrath of God
The Wizard of Oz? I watch
it every year just to hear
Bert Lahr clutch his tail
and moan, "Trapped!
Trapped like rats!"
All of these are films that
continue to excite and
stimulate me, both
as a film-maker and as
a human being.
Two painful omissions:
Out of the Past and
It's a Wonderful Life...

Ernest R. Dickerson

USA

Blade Runner
(director's cut)
8½
The Godfather &
The Godfather Part II
Ikiru
Kiss Me Deadly
Lawrence of Arabia
Malcolm X
Raging Bull
2001: A Space Odyssey
Vertigo

Atom Egoyan

Canada

L'Argent
The Colour of Pomegranates
8½
The King of Comedy
Mirror
La notte
The Passion of Joan of Arc
Persona
Theorem
Vivre sa vie

Federico Fellini

Italy

Maciste all' inferno
(Guido Brignone)
City Lights
Fra' Diavolo (Hal Roach
and Charles Rogers)
Frankenstein
(James Whale)
Stagecoach
Paisà
2001: A Space Odyssey
The Discreet Charm of the
Bourgeoisie
Toto e Peppino divisi a
Berlino (Giorgio Bianchi)
Intervista
My memories as a
cinemagoer go back to
the time when I was a
child. In those days we
didn't know about
directors, directors of
photography and so on;
we believed that the
actors did everything,
they were 'the cinema'.
My list is therefore a
sentimental one, where
old 'actor's movies' and
more recent works
occupy a significant
place. I should also add
that I very rarely go the
cinema...

Mike Figgis

United Kingdom

Bonnie and Clyde
Weekend
Once Upon a Time in
America
Under the Volcano
The Man Who Fell to Earth
Heimat
Incident at Owl Creek
Fanny and Alexander
La Femme d'à côté
(Truffaut)
Repulsion

Freddie Francis

United Kingdom

Citizen Kane
Ran
L'Année dernière
à Marienbad
The Innocents
Double Indemnity
The Man Who Shot Liberty
Valance
Paths of Glory
The Magnificent Ambersons
The Searchers
All That Money Can Buy
(William Dieterle)

William Friedkin

USA

Citizen Kane
All About Eve
The Treasure of the Sierra
Madre
2001: A Space Odyssey
Jesus of Montreal
Blow-Up
Singin' in the Rain
8½
Paths of Glory
Last Tango in Paris

Mercedes Frutos

Argentina

The Godfather, The Godfather
Part II & III
Gone with the Wind
The Informer
To Have and Have Not
Lawrence of Arabia
Good Morning, Babylon
Jules et Jim
The Best Years of Our Lives

Goutam Ghose

India

Citizen Kane
Modern Times
Paisà
Rashomon
Strike
Intolerance
Pather Panchali
La Règle du jeu
Rear Window
Wild Strawberries

Terry Gilliam USA <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>Seven Samurai</i> <i>The Seventh Seal</i> 8½ <i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> <i>Sherlock Jr.</i> <i>Pinocchio</i> <i>Les Enfants du paradis</i> <i>One-Eyed Jacks</i> <i>The Apartment</i>	Derek Jarman United Kingdom These are the films I like, not the ten best films ever. In alphabetical order: <i>L'Atalante</i> <i>The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant</i> <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> <i>The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp</i> <i>Madame de...</i> <i>Meshees of the Afternoon</i> <i>Modern Times</i> <i>Orphée</i> <i>Pandora's Box</i> <i>The Wizard of Oz</i>	Aki Kaurismäki Finland <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>Casque d'or</i> <i>Touch of Evil & The Trial</i> <i>Gertrud</i> <i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i> (Michael Gordon) <i>The Runaway Streetcar</i> (Buñuel) <i>Nanook of the North</i> <i>Bande à part & the others</i> (Godard) <i>Monterey Pop</i> (D. A. Pennebaker) <i>The White Reindeer</i> (Erik Blomberg)	George Kuchar USA <i>Baby Doll</i> <i>L'Éclisse</i> <i>Female Trouble</i> (John Waters) <i>The Black Cat</i> (Edgar Ulmer) <i>Robot Monster</i> (Phil Tucker) <i>The Adjuster</i> (Atom Egoyan) <i>La dolce vita</i> <i>It Conquered the World</i> (Corman) <i>There's Always Tomorrow</i> (Sirk) <i>Night of the Ghouls</i> (Edward D. Wood Jr) I have so many favourite films for different occasions that a top ten list just lets me concentrate on a slap-dash grab-bag of goodies that suddenly comes into focus while scanning my memory bank. The list is quite enormous, though, and includes cartoons, underground films, computer works and industrial and home movies...	Patrice Leconte France <i>Barton Fink</i> <i>Manhattan</i> <i>My Life as a Dog</i> <i>And the Ship Sailed On</i> <i>The Godfather</i> <i>Pierrot le fou</i> <i>Pépé le Moko</i> (Julien Duvivier) <i>The Philadelphia Story</i> <i>Close Encounters of the Third Kind</i> <i>Trop belle pour toi!</i> (Blier)	Chris Marker France Sorry, but I'm totally unable to play the game of the ten best films – just as I would be for the ten best anything... I hate competition anyway, and my list, had I the time to think of it, would vary from one minute to the next, among the hundreds of films that at one moment, for one reason or another (generally another), were of utmost importance to me. All I can say is, if there was one film to single out of the crowd, that would be <i>Vertigo</i> ...
Amos Gitai Israel/France <i>The Flowers of St. Francis</i> <i>Theorem</i> <i>King Lear</i> (Godard) <i>Othello</i> (Welles) <i>Some Came Running</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>The Big Heat</i> <i>The Quiet Man</i> <i>The Dead</i> <i>Reason, Debate and a Tale</i> (Ritwik Ghatak)	Neil Jordan Eire <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>La strada</i> <i>The Exterminating Angel</i> <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>The Wild Bunch</i> <i>They Live by Night</i> <i>Rashomon</i> 8½ <i>The General</i> <i>Persona</i>	Krzysztof Kieślowski Poland <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>The Kid</i> <i>Kes</i> <i>La strada</i> <i>The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner</i> <i>Un condamné à mort s'est échappé</i> <i>The Pram</i> (Bo Widerberg) <i>Intimate Lighting</i> (Ivan Passer) <i>The Musicians</i> (Kazimierz Karabasz) <i>Ivan's Childhood</i> (Tarkovsky)	Gillies MacKinnon Scotland <i>Mirror</i> <i>Come and See</i> (Klimov) <i>Ikiru</i> <i>Rocco and His Brothers</i> <i>Wild Strawberries</i> <i>Les Enfants du paradis</i> <i>The Gospel According to St. Matthew</i> <i>Aguirre, Wrath of God</i> <i>A Blonde in Love</i> <i>Novecento</i>	Richard Lester USA/United Kingdom <i>M. Hulot's Holiday</i> <i>The General</i> <i>The Job</i> <i>Fanny and Alexander</i> <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> <i>La Grande illusion</i> <i>Les 400 coups</i> <i>Nashville</i> <i>Seven Samurai</i> <i>Midnight Run</i>	Paul Mazursky USA <i>Amarcord</i> <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> <i>City Lights</i> <i>Dr. Strangelove</i> <i>The Godfather Part II</i> <i>Jules et Jim</i> <i>La Règle du jeu</i> <i>Seven Samurai</i> <i>The Treasure of the Sierra Madre</i>
Adoor Gopalakrishnan India <i>Au hasard Balthazar</i> <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> <i>Hiroshima mon amour</i> <i>The Kid</i> <i>La strada</i> <i>Pather Panchali</i> <i>Rashomon</i> <i>The Round-up</i> (Janecsó) <i>Stalker</i> <i>Tokyo Story</i>	Jovan Jovanović Belgrade <i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i> <i>The General</i> <i>L'Atalante</i> <i>Peter Ibbetson</i> (Henry Hathaway) <i>Meshees of the Afternoon</i> <i>The Blue Angel</i> <i>East of Eden</i> <i>Psycho</i> <i>Viridiana</i> <i>Chelsea Girls</i>	Oleg Kovalov Russia <i>Strike</i> <i>Ivan the Terrible</i> <i>The Girl with the Hat Box</i> (Boris Barnet) <i>Metropolis</i> <i>L'Age d'or</i> <i>L'Atalante</i> <i>La strada</i> 8½ <i>Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors</i> <i>Closely Observed Trains</i>	Hanif Kureishi United Kingdom <i>Ashes and Diamonds</i> <i>Badlands</i> <i>Carry On Camping</i> <i>Closely Observed Trains</i> <i>Fanny and Alexander</i> <i>The Fireman's Ball</i> <i>I'm All Right Jack</i> <i>La dolce vita</i> <i>The Marriage of Maria Braun</i> <i>Performance</i>	Michael Mann USA <i>Apocalypse Now</i> <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> <i>Faust</i> (Murnau) <i>Dr. Strangelove</i> <i>Kiss Me Deadly</i> <i>My Darling Clementine</i> <i>Providence</i> <i>Public Enemy</i> <i>Time of the Gypsies</i> (Kusturica) <i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i>	Mick McConnell United Kingdom <i>Annie Hall</i> <i>Celia</i> (Ann Turner) <i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i> (Jean-Paul Rappeneau) <i>Do the Right Thing</i> <i>Gregory's Girl</i> <i>The Lady Eve</i> <i>On the Waterfront</i> <i>Raging Bull</i> <i>Some Like It Hot</i> <i>The Third Man</i>
Auram Heffner Israel <i>Bande à part</i> <i>Citizen Kane</i> 8½ <i>The End of Summer</i> <i>Fat City</i> <i>Floating Clouds</i> (Naruse Mikio) <i>The Gold Rush</i> <i>Seven Brides for Seven Brothers</i> <i>The Tree of Wooden Clogs</i> <i>A Woman Under the Influence</i>	Isaac Julien United Kingdom <i>Un Chant d'amour</i> <i>Handsworth Songs</i> (Akomfrah) <i>Le Testament d'Orphée</i> <i>Touki Brouki</i> (Djibol Mausbeti) <i>The Colour of Pomegranates</i> <i>Illusions</i> (Julie Dash) <i>Imagining October</i> (Derek Jarman) <i>Killer of Sheep</i> (Burnett) <i>Wings of Desire</i> <i>Wild at Heart</i>	Srinivas Krishna Canada <i>Modern Times</i> <i>Night and Fog</i> <i>Pather Panchali</i> <i>High and Low</i> (Kurosawa) <i>La strada</i> <i>The Man with a Movie Camera</i> <i>Subarnarekha</i> (Ritwik Ghatak) <i>Chronique d'un été</i> (Rouch) <i>A bout de souffle/Alphaville</i> <i>Bye Bye Brasil</i> (Carlos Diegues)	Stanley Kwan Hong Kong <i>Tokyo Story</i> <i>The Searchers</i> <i>Taipei Story</i> (Edward Yang) <i>Raging Bull</i> <i>La luna</i> <i>The Godfather Part II</i> <i>Days of Being Wild</i> (Wong Kar-Wai) <i>Decalogue</i> <i>Blue Velvet</i> <i>Wings of Desire</i>	John McNaughton USA <i>Raging Bull</i> <i>Peter Pan</i> (Disney) <i>The Magnificent Ambersons</i> <i>Black Narcissus</i> 8½ <i>The Fugitive Kind</i> (Lumet) <i>Vertigo</i> <i>The Entertainer</i> <i>Last Tango in Paris</i> <i>Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia</i> This list is based solely on personal taste. It is not intended as an objective assessment of any film's place in history, a task for which I feel neither inclined nor qualified...	





'L'Atalante'



'Modern Times'



'The Godfather'



'Seven Samurai'



'The Passion of Joan of Arc'

Jeanine Meerapfel

Argentina/Germany

Barren Lives (Nelson)
Pereira dos Santos)
Andrei Rublev
La primera carga al machete
(Manuel Gómez)
Ukamau (Jorge Sanjinés)
Shoah
Der Untertan
(Wolfgang Staudte)
Terra em transe (Rocha)
Yesterday Girl (Kluge)
A Woman Under the
Influence
Conversation Piece
(Visconti)

Nikita Mikhalkov

Russia

Outskirts (Boris Barnet)
for the freshness of the
language.
8½ for its tenderness,
humour, fantasy.
Citizen Kane for the scale
of its thinking.
Bonnie and Clyde for its
sensuality and tension.
Death in Venice for its
atmosphere.
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's
Nest for the rare
combination of Slavic
depth of feeling and
American formal
precision.
L'Atalante – everything
the French nouvelle
vague later achieved
grew out of this film.
The Dead for the wisdom
of a departing artist.
Shame for the profundity
of its analysis.
Rashomon for its gigantic
temperament.

Jocelyn Moorhouse

Australia

Blue Velvet
Death in Venice
Don't Look Now
Forbidden Games
High and Low
Lawrence of Arabia
Nashville
The Night of the Hunter
The Third Man
Women in Love

Errol Morris

USA

Detour
Un condamné à mort s'est
échappé
There's Always Tomorrow
Psycho
Fort Apache
Bigger than Life
Stray Dog (Kurosawa)
The Sound Barrier
(David Lean)
Human Desire
Day of Wrath (Dreyer)

Govind Nihalani

India

Andrei Rublev
The World of Apu
Apocalypse Now
Citizen Kane
Ivan the Terrible
The Passion of Joan of Arc
La strada
Mephisto
The Great Dictator
Throne of Blood

Phillip Noyce

Australia

Apocalypse Now
The Conformist
Le Dossier 51
(Michel Deville)
The General
Kings of the Road
Notorious
Peeping Tom
Psycho
Raging Bull
Veronica Voss

Park Kwang-su

South Korea

Aguirre, Wrath of God
Battleship Potemkin
The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari
Fuera De Aqui!
(Jorge Sanjinés)
The Gospel According to
St. Matthew
Insiang (Lino Brocka)
Ivan's Childhood
King of the Children
(Chen Kaige)
Modern Times
The Money Order
(Sembène)

Zivojin Pavlović

Belgrade

The Outlaw and His Wife
(Sjöström)
Day of Wrath (Dreyer)
Ugetsu Monogatari
The Night of the Hunter
Ordet
Gertrud
Mouchette
The Last Wave (Peter Weir)
The Dead
White Hunter, Black Heart

Raoul Peck

Haiti/Germany

Husbands
Camera Buff (Kieślowski)
Killer of Sheep
(Charles Burnett)
The Firemen's Ball
(Milos Forman)
Le Mépris
The Passenger
Sans soleil
Stalker
Der Angriff der Gegenwart
auf die Ubrige Zeit
(Alexander Kluge)
Une chambre en ville
(Jacques Demy)

Vasily Pichul

Russia

Wild at Heart
The French Lieutenant's
Woman
The Tin Drum
The Red Snowball Tye
(Vasily Shukshin)
L'Atalante
The Beginning
(Gleb Panfilov)
Taxi Driver
A bout de souffle
Dreams (Kurosawa)
Raiders of the Lost Ark

Lourdes Portillo

Mexico/USA

Hiroshima mon amour
Viridiana
Memories of
Underdevelopment
Solaris
The Hour of the Star
(Suzana Amaral)
Brazil
The Terminator
Sweetie
Blue Velvet
The Battle of Chile
(Patricio Guzmán)

Sally Potter

United Kingdom

L'Atalante
Battleship Potemkin
Citizen Kane
The Cranes Are Flying
(Kalatozov)
Duck Soup
A Matter of Life and Death
M. Hulot's Holiday
The State of Things
The Third Man
The Wizard of Oz
I was reluctant to submit
this list because it was
too painful having to
leave out, among others:
Singin' in the Rain
The Colour of Pomegranates
My Friend Ivan Lapshin
Mirror
The Man in the White Suit
Bicycle Thieves
Visconti, Godard and all
of Indian cinema

Yvonne Rainer

USA

La Règle du jeu
Je tu il elle
(Chantal Akerman)
Le Mépris
The Poetic Justice of Omar
Khan (Edward J. Le Saint)
Zéro de conduite
Double Indemnity
Pandora's Box
The Exterminating Angel
Killer of Sheep
A Girl's Own Story
(Jane Campion)

Edgar Reitz

Germany

To Be or Not to Be (Lubitsch)
Umberto D
Rocco and His Brothers
La strada
Vertigo
Belle de jour
Jules et Jim
Nashville
La notte
Last Tango in Paris

Philip Ridley

United Kingdom

The Night of the Hunter
Days of Heaven
Barton Fink
Close Encounters of the
Third Kind
Red Sorghum
Novecento
Alien
Vertigo
Taxi Driver
Eureka

Patricia Rozema

Canada

A Woman Under the
Influence
Time of the Gypsies
Mirror
The Enigma of Kaspar
Hauser
Night and Fog
La strada
Fanny and Alexander
Oblomov
(Nikita Mikhalkov)
Orlando (Sally Potter)
Les 400 coups

John Schlesinger

United Kingdom

Umberto D
The Discreet Charm of the
Bourgeoisie
La Grande illusion
Ikiru
Citizen Kane
Fanny and Alexander
The Third Man
Sunset Boulevard
Singin' in the Rain
Les 400 coups

Paul Schrader

USA

La Règle du jeu
Tokyo Story
Pickpocket
Citizen Kane
The Passion of Joan of Arc
The Conformist
Vertigo
Masculin-féminin
City Lights
The Searchers
These are films that
have stood the test of
time for me. Long-
term relationships...

Martin Scorsese
USA

What follows is my text and list of ten best films – which are, in fact, five: I can only give five because even just one more than that opens the floodgates to countless other films. These are five movies that I continue to live by: 8½
Citizen Kane
The Leopard
The Red Shoes
The Searchers

Susan Seidelman
USA

It's a Wonderful Life
Sunset Boulevard
Nights of Cabiria
The Conformist
A Clockwork Orange
Citizen Kane
Badlands
Seven Beauties
(Lina Wertmüller)
Raging Bull
The Graduate

Mrinal Sen
India

The Passion of Joan of Arc
Four Nights of a Dreamer
(Bresson)
Monsieur Verdoux
Rashomon
Bicycle Thieves
Aparajito
Elektra (Jancsó)
Ashes and Diamonds
Zéro de conduite
Knife in the Water

Kumar Shahani
India

L'Arrivée d'un train en gare de Ciotat (Lumière)
Au hasard Balthazar
Battleship Potemkin
I Was Born, But...
Intolerance
The Rise to Power of Louis XIV
Sant Tukaram
Song of Ceylon
(Basil Wright)
A River Called Titash
(Ritwik Ghatak)
Viridiana
I think I catch myself speaking of these films most often, so I guess that they are my favourites, apart from all those films – which I have not mentioned – made since I started making them myself. *Titash* is the only exception, made by a contemporary, my guru...

Shu Kei
Hong Kong

Floating Clouds
Lancelot du lac
Psycho
Spring in a Small Town
Sunrise
Letter from an Unknown Woman
Written on the Wind
Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia
The Time to Live and the Time to Die
(Hou Xiaoxian)
New York, New York

Khosrow-Sinai
Iran

Battleship Potemkin
La Belle Noiseuse
Citizen Kane
8½
Modern Times
The Passion of Joan of Arc
The Red Desert
Triumph of the Will
Umberto D
Wild Strawberries
For me these and some others like *The Killing* *Fields, L'Année dernière à Marienbad*, *Full Metal Jacket*, etc... are the milestones which taught me different possibilities of film as art. I don't necessarily love all of them, but I know through my career I have been under their influence, not forgetting the Czechoslovakian and Polish films of the 60s. For our time the film which I think is the 'art film' at its most elaborate level is *La Belle Noiseuse*.

Jerzy Skolimowski
Poland

8½
Citizen Kane
Rashomon
The Seventh Seal
L'Atalante
Los olvidados
L'Eclisse
Rocco and His Brothers
L'Année dernière à Marienbad
The Godfather Part II

Michael Snow
Canada

Charmed Particles
(Andrew Noren)
Hart of London
Kodak Ghost Poems
(Andrew Noren)
Re-Entry (Carl Brown)
Scenes from Under Childhood
(Stan Brakhage)
Table (Ernie Gehr)
Text of Light
(Stan Brakhage)
Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son
(Ken Jacobs)
Zorns Lemma
(Hollis Frampton)
Kodak Ghost Poems, title has been changed and the film revised by the film-maker. I'm referring to what I saw when I saw it...

Fernando Solanas
Argentina

Citizen Kane
Rashomon
October
Modern Times
8½
The Passion of Joan of Arc
Bicycle Thieves
Wild Strawberries
Black God, White Devil
Andrei Rublev

Cherd Songsri
Thailand

Doctor Zhivago
Seven Samurai
Ben-Hur
Goodbye Mr. Chips
(Sam Wood)
The Ballad of Narayama
(Imamura)
The French Lieutenant's Woman
The Prince of Tides
The Last Emperor
Zorba the Greek
Gone with the Wind

Oliver Stone
USA

The Best Years of Our Lives
Lawrence of Arabia
Dr. Strangelove
Novecento
Raging Bull
Mutiny on the Bounty
(Frank Lloyd)
On the Waterfront
The Godfather & The Godfather Part II
Paths of Glory
Citizen Kane

Suzuki Seijun
Japan

Der Kongress Tanzt
(Erik Charell)
The Blue Angel
Stagecoach
Pépé le Moko
The Third Man
Arsenic and Old Lace
The Red Shoes
Singin' in the Rain
Rear Window
Daibosatsu Toge
(Inagaki Hiroshi)

Hans Jürgen Syberberg
Germany

Ai No Corrida
La Bête humaine
Sunrise
Rhapsody in August
Hôtel du Nord
(Marcel Carné)
Vertigo
Les Enfants du paradis
La Belle et la bête
Odette (Herbert Wilcox)
Opfergang (Veit Harlan)

Julien Temple
United Kingdom

L'Atalante
The Band Wagon
Black Narcissus
Bob le flambeur (Melville)
The Exterminating Angel
Out of the Past
Raging Bull
The Sweet Smell of Success
When Father Was Away On Business (Kusturica)

J. Lee Thompson
USA

La Grande illusion
Citizen Kane
Reds
City Lights
Raging Bull
My Life as a Dog
Casablanca
Les Diaboliques
Bicycle Thieves
The Third Man

Michael Tolkin
USA

Animal House because a good list needs a sick comedy.
Apocalypse Now because it's like *Huckleberry Finn* and when it leaves the river at the end you have to make a leap and stay with it.
Art of Vision
(Stan Brakhage)
Berlin Alexanderplatz because...
L'Eclisse because Monica Vitti dances like an African.

Killer of Sheep because it's formally one of the most interesting narrative films ever, since it suggests that poverty deprives people of a third act. If it were an Italian film from 1953, we would have every scene memorised.
La dolce vita because...
Sauve qui peut (la vie)
Stagecoach not for the obvious reason: it's here for Claire Trevor, who stands in for every great American character actor, who reminds us that movie acting is a lost art. I also thought of *My Darling Clementine*, for Victor Mature's line, "Shakespeare in Tombstone". And then he coughs.
The Wizard of Oz because of the wonderful things he does.

Monika Treut
Germany

The Devil is a Woman
A Foreign Affair
Madame X (Ottinger)
The Marriage of Maria Braun
The Night Porter
Orlando (Sally Potter)
Pink Flamingos
Faster Pussycat, Kill! Kill!
Touch of Evil
What Have I Done to Deserve This? (Pedro Almodóvar)

Evgeny Tsybmal
Russia

La dolce vita for the freshness of its vision.
Once Upon a Time There Was a Singing Blackbird (Otar Ioseliani) is a profound human tragedy against an elegant narrative.
The Last Detail (Hal Ashby), shows the process by which a human being becomes human.
Cries and Whispers for its pitiless psychological analysis.
The Night Porter for the musicality of its form.
The Sheltering Sky for the filigree skill of the direction.
The Shining for its ability to convey the degeneration of a human personality.
Death in Venice for its all-absorbing sensuality.
Fires on the Plain for its fantastic expressiveness.
The Unbearable Lightness of Being for its luminous melancholy.

Frederick Wiseman
USA

A Day at the Races
A Night at the Opera
Duck Soup
Hotel Terminus – The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie
(Marcel Ophüls)
Il bidone (Fellini)
Modern Times
Nights of Cabiria
The Dentist
The Face (Bergman)
The Gold Rush

John Woo
Hong Kong

Citizen Kane
2001: A Space Odyssey
Le Samourai
Lawrence of Arabia
Mean Streets
The Wild Bunch
The Godfather Part II
Seven Samurai
West Side Story
Raging Bull

Edward Yang
Taiwan

Aguirre, Wrath of God
L'Argent
Blue Velvet
A Clockwork Orange
8½
Floating Clouds
Harakiri
(Kobayashi Masaki)
Manhattan
Mon oncle d'Amérique
Nostalgia (Tarkovsky)

Thanks to
Elayne Tobin, Toby Moore, Ed Buscombe, Tony Rayns, Julia Knight, Philip Bergson, David Barrie, Julian Graffy, Anna Muzzarelli, Rikki Morgan, June Giovanni, Maggie Warwick, Rod Stoneman, Sheila Whitaker, Tomas Malinowski, Liz Heron



Why did Welles oust De Sica as the great auteur of the 60s? And why should we be concerned with such relative values? By Ian Christie

CANON FODDER

Everyone's doing it. *Positif* polled its past and present editorial-board members earlier this year and published the results in May. They were very much *Positif*: *La Règle du jeu* and *Citizen Kane* came first, followed by no less than two Kubricks (2001: *A Space Odyssey* and *Barry Lyndon*) and two Murnaus (*Sunrise* and *Nosferatu*). Even Barry Norman did it, in the *Radio Times* in October, but was generally felt to have cheated by 'selecting' a hundred titles – anyone could do that. And now it's *Sight and Sound*'s turn, and they've been doing it for longer and more consistently than anyone else. The name of the game is 'ten bests': cinema's very own trivial pursuit. Or is it?

This isn't a lament on the impossibility of choosing just ten films (or advice on how to cheat, by saying what you would have added). After all, no one has to contribute, and those who do would probably hate not to be asked. Nor is it an analysis of what changes in taste this decade's *Sight and Sound* poll will show – others will pronounce on who's in and out. No, what interests me here are the implications of this gloriously informal and irresponsible affair for the 'canon' of cinema. For while the other arts have their academic quantity surveyors and structural engineers hard at work on the fabric of the canon, cinema heads towards its first (and doubtless only) centenary in very different array.

Until quite recently, most of its historians trained as something else (or as nothing academic) and a fair number still work outside academia. Many have been – and still are – reviewers for the press, radio and television, as well as part-time teachers. Some are even film- and programme-makers. Unlike professors of literature, music and art, they remain close to the hustle of the contemporary film industry – which also includes among its practitioners some of the most discriminating critics and collectors (think of Scorsese). And, of course, for most of these guardians of the canon, the movies were a passion – a guilty pleasure – before they were a profession.

So while cinema studies increasingly conducts itself as an academic discipline, there remains (happily) a core of passionate partisanship built into its foundations. But does its agenda, the canon, really matter? To those who think this is just a harmless game, I would say, 'think again'. Not only does the canon directly govern what future generations of students

will learn about, but indirectly it affects what is bought for television, what's programmed in cinémathèques and repertory cinemas, what's released on video, what appears in cinema-related publishing and, perhaps most important, what archives prioritise and preserve. Anyone who doubts that the cinema canon is a powerful reality has about as much imagination as the Lumière brothers, who doubted their invention had a future.

So what has shaped the canon that underpins all these activities? The current version seems to me very much a product of the cultural politics of the 60s and 70s that itself gave birth to modern academic film studies. Indeed, it's arguable that admission to the academy owed much to the surge of canon contestation that marked the 60s. And before that? To trace the origins of the 'ur-canon' against which the 60s revolted, I suspect we must look to Paul Rotha's *The Film Till Now*, first published in 1930 and then frequently updated to make it the one book likely to appear on any film enthusiast's shelf before the 60s.

Rotha's opinionated survey has many virtues among its manifest biases. But what concerns me here is the book's appendix, 'The Production Units of Some Outstanding Films, with their Players', a list of 114 films, mainly features, drawn from Europe, the US and USSR. Interestingly, in view of the dominance of fiction features in all subsequent canons, Rotha included some shorter films in his list – experimental documentaries like Eugène Deslaw's *La March des machines* (1928), Alberto Cavalcanti's *En rade* (1929) and Jean Epstein's *Finis Terrae* (1928), and even Man Ray's Dada shorts – and began it with a selection of twelve 'absolute and abstract films', mainly by Hans Richter. The list, like the book, reflects the impact of German Expressionism and Soviet montage on Rotha's generation, but it also includes an eclectic range of American films by such as Ernst Lubitsch, Cecil B. DeMille, King Vidor, Raoul Walsh and Clarence Brown.

One important feature of Rotha's pioneer filmography is his notation of films not shown publicly in Britain. Most of these were seen at the original Film Society in London and later at its regional affiliates. While it is easy to sneer at the limitations of 'film society taste', we should remember that *all* canonisation is affected by access and context. What cannot be seen at all is clearly ineligible for the canon, but what can only be seen with difficulty may gain extra kudos, only to lose this when it becomes commonplace (think, for instance, how the status of Chaplin's legendary unseen *A Woman of Paris* dropped after its long-delayed re-issue). It is all too easy to forget in the era of cinémathèques and video-collecting how difficult it was to see films one had read or heard about. In a 1948 book on Soviet cinema, Thorold Dickinson wondered if anyone could be found in Britain who remembered seeing the Soviet science-fiction spectacular *Aelita*, while also noting that Eisenstein's *The Strike* had never been shown outside Russia. If the hard-to-see titles of the 20s gained special status because of their exclusivity, was this not as true of the celebrated films *maudits* of the 60s and 70s: the Nicholas Rays, Douglas

Sirks, Raoul Walshs, Edgar Ulmers, no less than the Roberto Rossellinis and Max Ophüls, or indeed of the hits of the current early cinema movement, like *Traffic in Souls* (1913) and *Lucky Star* (1929), visible only at the cinémathèques and Pordenone?

The film-society canon had in any case calcified by the late 50s, deprived of the early post-war support it had drawn from Italian neo-realism and documentary trends elsewhere in America and Europe. While Bazin was questioning its cumbersome metaphysics of representation in the name of a radical new mystique of immanence, was there perhaps also an underlying Cold War impetus behind the challenge to the *bien-pensant* leftism of the film-society tradition that emerged on both sides of the Atlantic in the early 60s? At any rate, in its Anglo-American forms, this amounted to a polemic in favour of American popular cinema against the 'distortions' (ostensibly stylistic, but perhaps political too) of traditional European art cinema.

Less than meets the eye

The first salvo in the English-language canon wars was fired in 1963, when Andrew Sarris published his trail-blazing survey of American directors in *Film Culture* (later expanded in book form as *American Cinema: Directors and Directions*), an ingenious and witty adaptation of Bazin's *politique des auteurs* to grind other axes. Taking issue with what he called "forest critics", Sarris poured scorn on the linked beliefs that 'foreign films are better' (while shrewdly noting that "American films are often overvalued abroad"), that documentaries are 'more realistic' than fiction, and that the avant-garde blazes trails for commercial cinema to follow. Style, conviction and stamina mattered more to Sarris than politics and self-conscious artistry, for this was high auteurism, where whole careers were weighed instead of single films. Thus American Fritz Lang was at least as good as German Lang, and Josef von Sternberg, Edgar Ulmer and Budd Boetticher needed to be championed more than those worthies grouped in the dismissive categories of "Less than meets the Eye" and "Strained Seriousness".

It was brilliant, knockabout stuff, well suited to fire a generation that knew that Hawks and Hitchcock were as good as Bergman and Buñuel, but lacked the confidence to insist on it. Here was a ready-made canon, recklessly ranked in order of merit, complete with a tantalising section labelled "Subjects for Further Research". How could one resist the invitation?

However, this offered little guidance on the parochial problems of Britain – which still had a cinema at the time, though not one that inspired the readers of *Cahiers du cinéma* and Sarris (or Peter Wollen later in *New Left Review*). The early 60s also saw the launch of *Movie* in Britain, with an equally polemical broadside which dismissed all but a handful of British directors as "Competent or Ambitious" or simply "The Rest", while singling out only an eccentric handful (including the refugee Josef Losey) as worthy to set alongside the giants of American cinema. Several years on, *Movie* would lay the foundations for a revision of the British ►

◀ canon by publishing Raymond Durnat's pioneering essay on Michael Powell, but its starting point was national self-castigation.

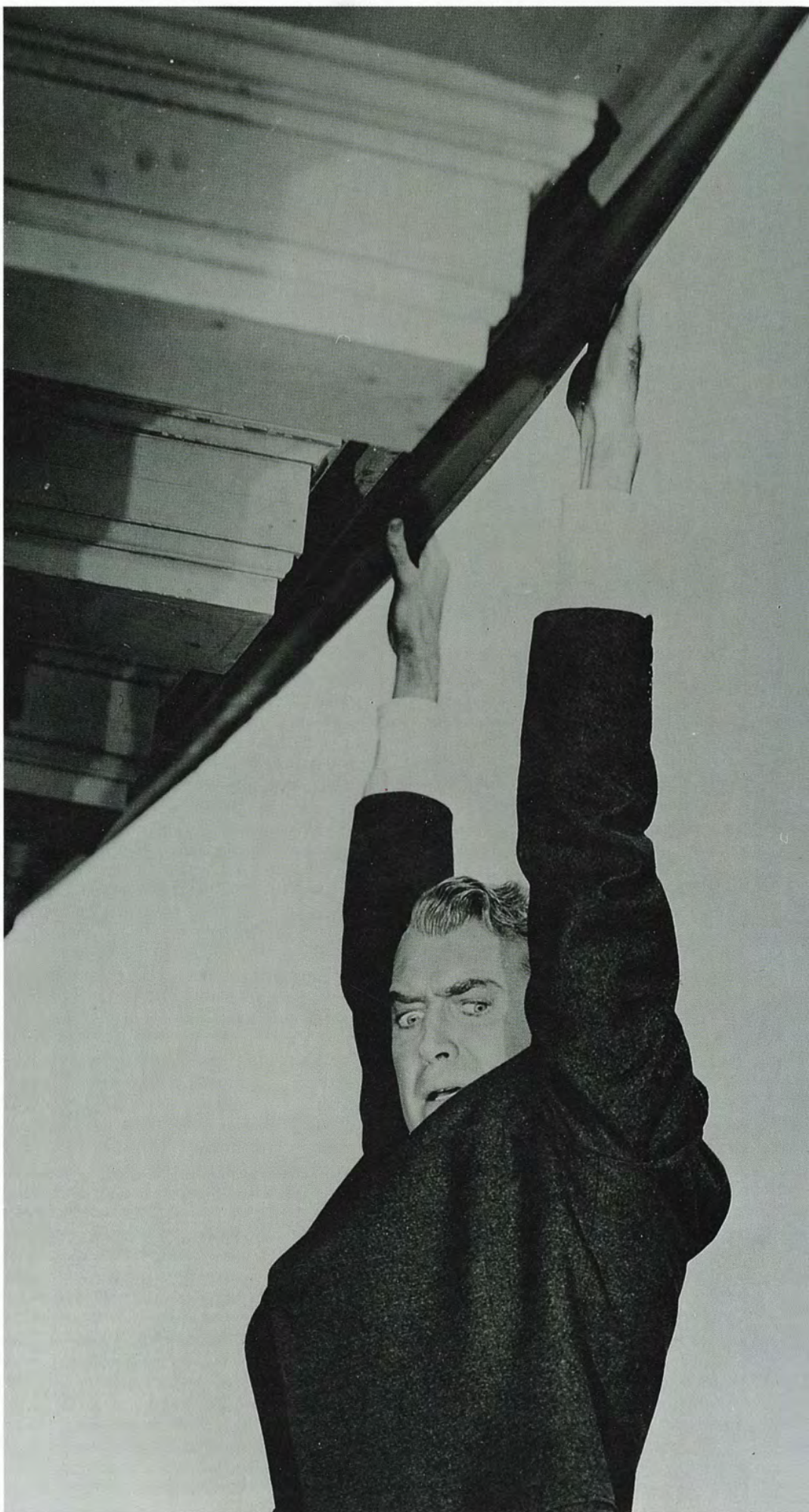
In retrospect, this episode usefully highlights an important aspect of canonisation: its cultural or national specificity. For while cinema still retains a powerfully 'global' dimension, similar canons nevertheless serve different functions in different cultures. For example, for British or French critics to espouse American films when their cinemas are dominated by American exporters creates an ambivalence, in that it has an arguable impact on attitudes to domestic production. Either home-produced films are derided as inferior to American work, or, more commonly, they are granted a 'protected' status and judged by different criteria (I'm reminded of Boris Barnet's ironic description of himself as a "Soviet director", insisting that this was a special, inferior category from which a lucky Soviet film-maker might escape). For the *Movie* critics, several of whom were to become film-makers in their own right, the best British films were those least 'British' and most like the American and French models they admired.

Leverage for change

The 1962 *Sight and Sound* poll also recorded a decisive shift: gone was the De Sica-Chaplin-Griffith-Eisenstein-Flaherty pantheon of 1952, now replaced by Welles, Antonioni, Renoir, Von Stroheim and Mizoguchi. At the end of the decade, Wollen's influential *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema* acknowledged Sarris' influence and offered a justification for such lists and rankings: "I think it is only by publication, comparison and discussion of ratings that individual, subjective taste can be transcended". Wollen went on to offer his own 'pantheon', consisting exclusively of American directors, but added coily – in a strategy familiar to all list-makers – the throw-away "for the record, I think that the best work of Renoir, Rossellini and Mizoguchi is probably better than anything produced in America". Shades of all those caveats that still accompany *S&S* poll returns.

The final engagement in the 60s canon war was probably *Cinema* magazine's poll of October 1969, drawn from a mixed bag of young contributors who had already imbibed Bazin, Sarris and Wollen and experienced the heady mix of cinema and insurrection that accompanied May '68. The *Cinema* poll was iconoclastic, self-advertising and eclectic in the extreme. Here Sam Fuller rubbed shoulders with Bergman and Bertolucci, flanked by Kubrick, computers and Kenneth Anger. Truth to tell – although most of those taking part would have been horrified by the idea – it was not so different from many of the individual 'top tens' submitted to *Sight and Sound* in 1972. This was a period of unparalleled eclecticism, where an interest in early, avant-garde and exotic cinema, together with a degree of Hollywood *maudit* connoisseurship, was not uncommon among Britain's emergent film intelligentsia. Its legacy was an institutionalised counter-canon, which became the founding canon of film studies.

Other movements contributed to this new counter-canon. Feminism demanded a revision



TOP 10 FILMS

Canons to the west,
canons to the east:
Hitchcock's 'Vertigo', left
and Mizoguchi's 'Ugetsu
Monogatari', right



of cinema history to reveal those women filmmakers ignored by traditional historiography. It also insisted on the exemplary importance of hitherto non-canonic films, such as the melodramas *Now Voyager* and *Mildred Pierce*. Latin American militant cinema spearheaded a recognition of film-making throughout the Third World and a reinterpretation of past 'revolutionary' models, resulting in the promotion of Dziga Vertov and Alexander Medvedkin over Eisenstein. And the engagement of former avant-gardists in America and Britain – Yvonne Rainer, Michael Snow, Peter Gidal, Sally Potter – with narrative and with the 'new' film theory created the kind of alliance which had not existed since, ironically, the end of the 20s. Once again, questions of politics, form and spectatorship were on the agenda. Films, as many outside the alliance were to complain, seemed secondary to theories.

And so, to an extent, they were. Those familiar with the canon debates of the last decade in literary studies know only too well how much time has been spent demonstrating that canons are mystificatory, repressive and, importantly, *not* about the works they enshrine. From the consecration of Shakespeare early this century as the national font of English literature to the recent battle between neo-conservatives and liberals over 'standards' in American higher education, the canon serves as a banner, a declaration of principles, a stick with which to beat one's opponents.

Maintaining the canon of 'great works', as Raymond Williams, Edward Said and others have argued, involves a complex set of denials, repressions and, of course, exclusions. But is the answer simply to attack the idea of the canon itself? To say that *all* works are significant in certain ways, some merely more so than others? Even the canon's severest critics would not urge this. Some would preserve the canon of 'tradition' and want to show how this was created and what forces keep it in place. Others would want to pose a counter-canon or canvas radical revisions to the traditional one, judging this to be a way to promote new and neglected work and perspectives (see, for instance, Fredric Jameson's *The Geopolitical Aesthetic*, which offers something amounting to a provisional post-modern canon).

So how does this relate to cinema's 'best ten'

lists? At a minimum, what these do is to oblige those taking part to make hard, invidious choices. This is in itself of value: to revisit judgments made perhaps many years ago, and to question these in the light of what we know and think and see now. For individuals, the lists are – as Lindsay Anderson notes – a kind of self-portrait (and to read the changing selections of those who've done it over four decades is fascinating). Institutionally, they record how scholarship – and the brute fact of accessibility – have swept across the certainties of the past, and in some cases changed, in others reconfirmed, them. Buster Keaton certainly entered the canon thanks in no small part to Raymond Rohauer's re-issue of his films in the 60s and now he has slipped; the recent restoration of *L'Atalante* will doubtless help this film in the 1992 poll.

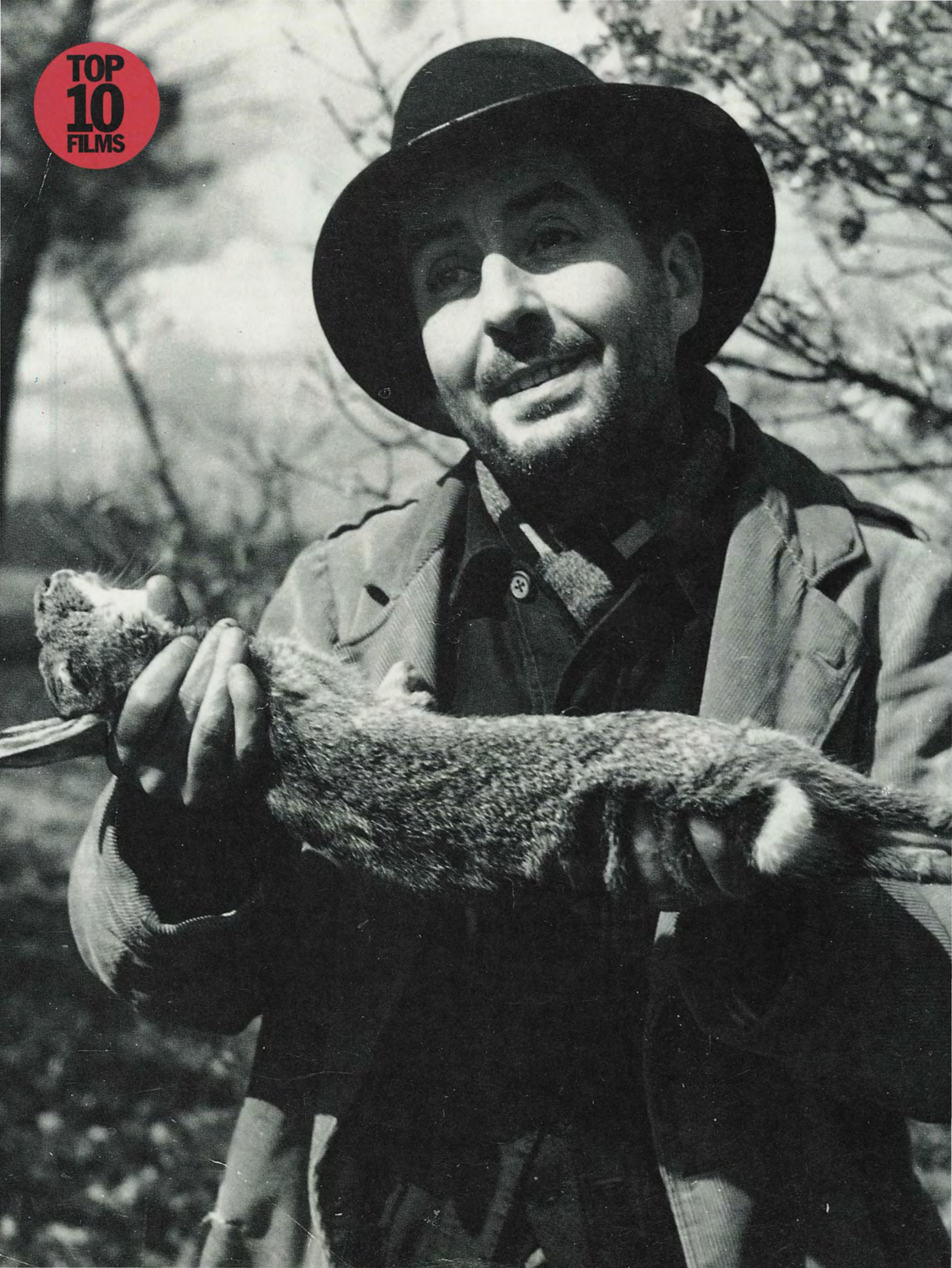
The international cinema canon favours sound fiction features, and draws heavily from small *œuvres* and disrupted careers. In this, it betrays perhaps a 'redemptive' tendency, posthumously rewarding struggle and achievement. Animation, documentary, silent-period cinema and the sheer bulk of many 'classic' Hollywood careers have all proved a deterrent. None of which is surprising, but it does exercise a conservative influence on programming and scholarship, which could otherwise exert more leverage for expansion and change.

Scope for disagreement

The canon as a consensus on what is worth interpreting and re-interpreting is a notion particularly associated with the critic Frank Kermode. This may prove especially apposite to the present if, as I suspect, we are seeing a return to the canon which privileges works of organic unity and undoubted 'quality' against the fragmentary, the contingent or the primitive. Kermode is acute on the ways in which the canon keeps ancient works seemingly modern through the accumulative labour of interpretation. This may be why so many have found the 'new historicity' of early cinema studies more attractive than a continuing engagement with the actually new and still exotic. It is indeed a tension to be found in all the major cultural critics who have been most critical of the canon's conservatism. Have we, I wonder, lived through the collapse of a faith in Modernism which sustained cinema's 'new canon', only to emerge into a *fin-de-siècle* romanticism, now buttressed by impeccable scholarship? Or is the spread of video creating an imaginary cinematheque in which, rather than expanding our horizons, we are nostalgically reliving earlier stages of cinema's development?

None of these heady questions will be answered by this decade's 'ten best', though they might at least be posed. Meanwhile, canons are taking a new turn with such recent developments as the BFI's 'Treasures of the Archive' list of 360 titles (now accompanied by books on individual films) and a 'classics on video' support scheme from the MEDIA programme's Espace Vidéo Européen. Both offer plenty of scope for disagreement, which of course is the whole point of canoneering. So, once more into the breach, dear friends...

TOP
10
FILMS



Class action: Jean Renoir's 'La Règle du jeu' moves back and forth across the social worlds, gathering up the excluded Carette, opposite, as well as parts of the accredited order, such as Paulette Goddard, right



THE EXCEPTION AND THE RULE

'La Règle du jeu' may be an acclaimed masterpiece, but its greatness can only be fully understood if we see it as part of 30s French cinema. By Ginette Vincendeau

"For us there was only one French director, and that was Jean Renoir", said Claude Chabrol, while François Truffaut called Renoir "the greatest film-maker in the world". New Wave directors, as critics, had turned to Hollywood to elaborate their theories of authorship. But when it came to practice, they followed in the footsteps of their mentor, André Bazin, in idolising Jean Renoir (while, in typical polemical fashion, rejecting practically every other French film-maker).

This was in the 50s, when Renoir was working again in France after his Hollywood episode (and films in India and Italy). With the exception of *French Cancan* (1954), however, his post-war work did not match his pre-war achievements, either commercially or, despite the efforts of *Cahiers du cinéma*, critically. It was also in the 50s that *La Règle du jeu*, after its disastrous release in 1939, was being rediscovered, to great acclaim. Subsequently, it shot up to third place in the 1962 *Sight and Sound* 'top ten' (it had been tenth in the first survey, in 1952). It moved up again, to second place, in 1972, where it has remained ever since.

The perennial presence of *La Règle du jeu* in the 'top ten' raises interesting questions for film history, as does Renoir's position, since the New Wave, as the world's idea of a great (European) auteur. Are there some objective qualities in Renoir's work which dictate its presence in the roll call of excellence? Is it possible to account for Renoir's eminence in the pantheon of great auteurs without resorting, or resorting only, to subjective value judgments? And why is it this particular film which has been singled

out within an oeuvre that is not short of masterpieces?

The fact that it is *La Règle du jeu* which endures in 1992 among the 'great films' – rather than, for instance, the more politically committed *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* (1935), or in another vein *La Grande illusion* (1937) or *La Bête humaine* (1938), both immensely popular at the box office and with critics at the time of their release – gives us a few clues as to how such judgments emerge. *La Règle du jeu* is a film with a legend. There is a poignant, *maudit* aura about it. It came out shortly before the Second World War – and thus will forever be deemed to 'foreshadow' it – and, more importantly perhaps, it was a resounding failure. It suffered banning at the beginning of the war, and prints were later destroyed by bombs. It is also a 'difficult' film, often a baffling experience on first viewing, though a rewarding one eventually. And this, of course, is, as the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu argues, a condition for 'great' (bourgeois) art, as opposed to the popular, which delivers its goods straightforwardly. Accordingly, the limpidity of *La Grande illusion* seems a faint embarrassment to many critics; it is, somehow, 'too easy' or 'too obvious'; whereas one has to work at appreciating *La Règle du jeu*.

A Bourdieu-type approach to the body of Renoir criticism would be an interesting exercise, but it is not my point here. Nor do I want to dispute the – to me indisputable – greatness of *La Règle du jeu*. Rather, I want to consider this greatness not as some free-floating, mysterious quality, but as emerging from 30s French cinema as a whole. I want to plunge Renoir ►

◀ back within his own production context and reclaim his popular dimension, not in order to drown his exceptionality, but to highlight it. This is necessary because one of the constant features of auteur criticism is to isolate individual film-makers from their contexts, and particularly so if this context is 'foreign' (not British or American). Renoir, perhaps like all great auteurs, was both typical and exceptional. His 'greatness' comes from the combination of both qualities in his work.

Renoir's declaration that "Each time I make a film, I am honestly and sincerely motivated by the desire to please the public" was not a rhetorical claim. Unlike many French avant-garde silent directors such as Jean Epstein or Louis Delluc, who had problems making the transition to the talkies or did not make it at all, Renoir thrived with the coming of sound, which tremendously enlarged film production and audiences. He became a star film-maker of the 30s, equally prominent in committed left journals like *Ciné-Liberté* as in the fan magazine *Pour Vous*, read by millions.

Renoir's popularity had several dimensions. A number of his films were big box office, in particular *On Purge Bébé* (1931) and *Les Bas-fonds* (1936), as well as *La Grande illusion* and *La Bête humaine*. The argument is often made that such films as *On Purge Bébé* and *Chotard et Cie* (1934) were purely commercial assignments, but the point is that even though Renoir could afford to pursue independent projects up to a point (his personal wealth was substantial, but sound films were expensive), he needed in any case to be part of the mainstream because this was how the production and distribution structure in 30s France worked. After the collapse of Pathé-Natan and Gaumont in 1933-34, all French productions were technically 'independent', because of the fragmented production structure. Renoir's casting around to find independent producers like Pierre Braunberger or stars like Jean Gabin to get a project off the ground, was typical of the whole of French cinema at that time.

Some argue that this loose structure was crucial in allowing a committed left artist like Renoir to work, particularly during the Popular Front, but in truth it was equally favourable to right-wing projects. Even the production by subscription of *La Marseillaise* (made in 1937 with donations from CGT trade-union members) had been used by the right: in 1936 Léon Poirier's *L'Appel du silence*, a biography of the missionary Charles de Foucauld, was financed by Catholic church members' funds. But this 'anything goes' aspect of French production did not extend to distribution and exhibition, which were oriented more squarely towards the mainstream. Even though film clubs and art cinemas existed in the 30s, they were not nearly as prominent as in the 20s, and their second heyday would come only after the war, precisely at the point when 'popular' and 'art' audiences were beginning to separate. Back in 30s France, auteur and popular cinemas merged at the point of exhibition. To make an impact, films, whoever had made them, had to be released in major first-run Parisian cinemas. The fact that Renoir was able to straddle auteur



Dancing in the dark:
inside the house even
the dance cannot dissolve

**the tensions and the
irreconcilable needs of
the film's protagonists**

and mainstream cinema emerged from this production context, which on the one hand allowed him a large degree of control over his material at production stage, but on the other imposed constraints by presupposing a wide popular audience.

We can see this in Renoir's choice of material, which was very much of his time. His fascination with French social milieux, popular and aristocratic, had a long history and was shared by many French film-makers. Audiences clearly liked this very ethnocentric cinema. *La Chienne* (1931), *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* and *La Bête humaine*, in their depiction of the working class, should be seen in conjunction with other populist melodramas – not just the well-known ones of Feyder, Grémillon, Duvivier or Carné, but Litvak's *Coeur de lilas*, Genina's *Paris-Béguin*, or Chenal's *Le Dernier tournant* – to appreciate how typical, almost banal, are Renoir's iconography, settings and characterisations, yet how individual is his rendering of them.

The reverse side of this sociological coin is provided by *La Règle du jeu*, which focuses on the aristocracy. Partly on Renoir's own indication, *La Règle du jeu* is always seen in the light of classical and romantic French theatre. Yet it also owes something to a decade of boulevard play adaptations – a pervasive, less 'noble' and critically much decried genre of French cinema. Renoir himself was no stranger to 'filmed theatre', with his adaptations *On Purge Bébé* (a Feydeau farce), *Chotard et Cie* (based on a play by Roger Ferdinand) and *Boudu sauvé des eaux* (1932, based on René Fauchois). But whereas Renoir criticism has been quick either to dismiss this heritage, regularly quoting Renoir, who said he did not even remember making *Chotard et Cie*, or to emphasise how different Renoir's renderings of these plays are from 'straight' filmed theatre, some of that heritage is not entirely negative or negligible to *La Règle du jeu*.

Both the cheap, 'quickie' *Chotard et Cie* and the accomplished *La Règle du jeu* are informed by a derision of institutions characteristic of filmed theatre, its disregard of complex character psychology, and its frequent appeal to an 'upstairs, downstairs' dramatic structure. *Chotard et Cie* even features a revelatory fancy-dress ball. The praised unconventional morality of Renoir's films, from the cynical ending of *La Chienne* to the 'cover-up' of *La Règle du jeu* and the sexual games of its characters, should also be placed in the relatively permissive context of 30s France – permissive mostly in male terms that is, and Renoir is no exception here. For if

the 'permissiveness' is startling when compared with Hays Code Hollywood, it is not when seen in relation to many of the films based on boulevard plays. Renoir's mixing of comedy and drama – *La Règle du jeu* is called a *drame gai* – is also within this tradition, as is, on the whole, his use of actors, despite the claim, initiated by André Bazin, that Renoir used actors "against the grain".

More than any other aspect of his work, it is Renoir's *mise en scène* and cinematography that have been singled out as exceptional, particularly his use of long mobile takes and staging in depth. The scenes of the arrival of guests at the château and the antics of characters in its corridors in *La Règle du jeu* are often-quoted examples of this exceptional use of the camera. But the fact is that long and mobile takes were quite common in 30s French cinema and many directors used longer takes than Renoir. Such shots were both a stylistic signature of auteur-directors like Duvivier and Chenal, but also of less remarkable film-makers, including those considered 'hacks', like Pierre Colombier or Roger Richebé. Films such as *Crime et châtiment* (Chenal), *La Belle équipe* (Duvivier) or *Ces Messieurs de la Santé* (Colombier) all contain shots that are almost two minutes long, with multiple reframings and complex negotiations of cinematic space and decor. Clearly cinematographers were trained for this type of camerawork, decors were built to accommodate it, and actors were used to it.

This was a style developed partly in response to the theatrical tradition, which Renoir too was familiar with. But if he was following a practice widespread in French cinema, his specificity was to systematise it and, especially, to put it to the service of a more cinematically naturalistic environment. And, of course, he used staging in depth more than any other director – using several layers of corridors, doorways and windows, constantly opening and shutting spaces, with characters weaving in and out of them, where others were content, on the whole, with lateral reframings. Renoir's cinematography is always seen as resistance to, or at least difference from, Hollywood. This is not so much untrue as incomplete, for it ignores the fact that it was also part of the French mainstream. This difference should properly be seen as part of a national tradition, rather than just the invention of one genius.

Renoir's films of the 30s dominated French cinema, not just because they were different from it, but because they summed it up and extended it, and, what's more, extended it in ideologically sympathetic directions. Renoir's populism became increasingly backward-looking and out-of-synch with French audiences after the war, but in the 30s it was sharpened by the politics of the Popular Front, by anti-fascism and by pacifism. If Renoir is still the world's idea of a great auteur, able to pursue his own preoccupations while addressing a popular audience, it is important to see that this was due to the conditions in which he worked. This is why Renoir was such a role model for the New Wave, but one they could not possibly replicate, because these conditions had forever vanished by the time they started to work.

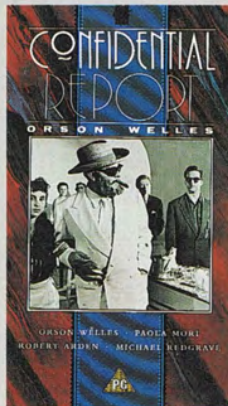
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- 7000 key personnel listed by company and job title.
- Hundreds of production companies with American studio deals.

Example Listing:

DONNER PRODS., RICHARD 818-954-4437

Type: Features - Deal: Warner Bros. Pictures

c/o Warner Bros. Pictures
4000 Warner Blvd., Bldg. 102, Burbank, CA 91522-0001
Fax: 818-954-4908.

Richard Donner Director-Producer
Scott Nimerfro Dir., Development
Jennie Lew-Tugend Producer - Exec. VP, Production
Julie Durk Story Editor
Cynthia Neber Exec. Asst. to Richard Donner
Mark Marshall Assoc. Producer
Alexander B. Collett Assoc. Producer
Jason Roberts Asst. to Richard Donner

CREDITS:

Lethal Weapon I, II & III - The Lost Boys - Superman

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Gone to pod

By 1956 I was a ferocious movie snob. Having seen something like 2,000 American movies in my fourteen years, and having loved most of them, I entered my foreign phase: if a film didn't have subtitles it was second rate – unless it was English and starred Alec Guinness. Advanced thinking at Forest Hills High School was of the opinion that after Adlai Stevenson's second Presidential defeat, there was little hope for American culture. Exceptions were made for Sgt Bilko (Americans are gullible fools), Eugene O'Neill (Americans are incapable of facing the truth), Tennessee Williams (sensitive people are destroyed in America), and most sci-fi movies (America is headed for apocalypse). I had relished the judders and jolts of *The Thing* and *The War of the Worlds*, but no sci-fi movie of the 50s could match the revelation of the unforgettable *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. As I watched it, mesmerised, one rainy Friday night at the Main Street Theater, the scales fell from my eyes. Yes. That's what's going on: Americans are being turned into vegetables. Of course.

Let me contextualise this thrill of recognition. Until I was nine, we lived in Brooklyn, New York. Concrete street culture, and the streets with sonorous names: *Utica Avenue... Flatbush Avenue... Eastern Parkway*. Then, in a misbegotten notion of upward mobility, my parents shifted us to the borough of Queens. Countless acres of marsh and farmland had been developed after the Second World War into 'garden apartments', all of which followed the same basic pattern: rectangles of two-storey buildings built around a communal 'garden' (large patches of dirt spotted with blotches of grass). The atmosphere was deadly quiet. The shops and candy stores, library and movie theatre were a mile away on – get this – *Main Street*. Andy Hardy was meant to shop on Main Street, not me. I wanted the clamour of Flatbush Avenue. I wanted movie theatres with names like the Rugby, the Granada, the Kings...

Across Flushing Meadow Lake I was bussed to Forest Hills High School, dominated by mindless boys in button-down shirts and girls in tweed skirts whose only interest seemed to be gaining the ID bracelet of one of the buttoned-down boys. Issues of war, poverty, civil rights or politics hardly disturbed the corridors. When one of our neighbours was kicked off the Playground Committee on the grounds he was a communist, I could get no one in my home room class to register concern, much less anger. Sometimes it seemed that only me, Peter Ruben and Rosalie Katz understood that something was radically wrong with our society. And then on that wet Friday night at the Main Street Movie Theater, I discovered that Don Siegel knew what was going on.

Invasion begins with good Doctor Miles returning to his home town of Santa Mira, California, after a trip. His waiting room is full of distraught people claiming that their closest relatives are no longer themselves: "There's something missing... there's no emotion". I was already on the edge of my seat. The town psychiatrist says it's all

Television writer Howard Schuman, whose recent credits include 'Selling Hitler', remembers the unnerving power of 'Invasion of the Body Snatchers' – with its injunction, 'Sleep No More'

a mass delusion, but when Miles sees a pod-like replica of his friend Jack lying on Jack's pool table, the nightmare truth becomes inescapable: Santa Mira is the first staging post of an alien invasion. Humans are to be replaced by their pod counterparts, and the transformation into this null, vegetable state occurs when the human falls asleep. By the end, only Miles and his lover Becky are still human, pursued by the entire town, and then Becky dozes, just for a minute, and she too is gone to pod. We are left with an image of Miles rushing madly on to a highway, screaming at passing motorists, "You're next" – and not even a tacked-on happy ending in which some sturdy FBI agents take Miles seriously can erase the crazed, doom-ridden cry.

I stumbled out into Main Street. To me, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* was practically a documentary. Many years later I was to read that Don Siegel's vision was hysterically anti-communist, but not for me it wasn't. It was about the desire of Americans to live the 'painless', non-examined life. It was also an exhilarating message not to trust your family, or experts, to allow no one to mediate between you and the world. But most of all, don't fall asleep (Siegel wanted to call his film *Sleep No More*). I loved to sleep, and the idea that this lovely, beneficent state could be the doorway to vegetation unnerved me as much as any of the film's other ideas.

Body Snatchers was the scariest and most relevant sci-fi film I'd ever seen. Perhaps the most relevant movie period. It illuminated the Eisenhower 50s and it went on shedding light in the 60s right up to the time when millions of Americans at last began to examine what was happening in Vietnam. And then, foolishly, I began to believe that this terrifying *Invasion* was about to become hearteningly irrelevant. Wrong.

Body snatching in England

I moved to London in 1968. It seemed a far cry from Santa Mira... although I noticed that my English friends were perhaps more willing to look into America's problems than ones nearer home. Then I began to spend every Sunday in New Malden, visit-

ing my mother's lover. She lived in an extremely pleasant cul-de-sac of pre-war council houses... and it was here that I found Santa Mira again. The cul-de-sac was home to a group of palpably intelligent women whose doctors had prescribed them massive tranquillisers for various depressive states. It was a little island of negativity where politics, culture or even soccer were never discussed. I found myself writing a television play about a Wimbledon accountant and sci-fi buff being driven mad by his depressive family. To exorcise his anger, he writes a story which imagines that all of Wimbledon is being turned into a race of giant carrots by beings from another planet. The director filmed these excerpts in an elegant pastiche ('scope and all) of my beloved *Body Snatchers*... The movie had returned to obsess me and again to shed light on events in my adopted country. *Sleep No More*. Indeed.

Don Siegel's 1956 vision seemed more horrifyingly on target in the 80s than in any other decade. Britain and America had turned into nations of high-spending vegetables, wilfully choosing not to examine the consequences of the social and economic policies that were bringing short-term affluence to many people, long-term despair to millions of others. People seemed sapped by the alien forces of the market. At the moment, I still fancy myself as good Doctor Miles, fighting on to the end, but find myself dangerously near a Becky situation – "Oh, just let me sleep for a few minutes..."

And yet in October 1992, 250,000 real people marched through London in the rain to protest against mining closures, hospital closures and to declare they'd had enough of the vegetable state. Perhaps there's a sequel in all this. Where the process is reversed. Pod into human. How does one dream about this without falling asleep? Maybe by remembering Don Siegel's take on his own masterwork: "It exposed what a large group of people are doing to us culturally. They are pods. They have no soul and I'm sorry to say most people are that way. I think the pods outnumber us, if indeed we ourselves are not pods".



REVIEWS

Reviews, synopses and full credits for all the month's new films and new British TV films

Blue Ice

USA 1992

Director: Russell Mulcahy

Certificate 15
Distributor Guild
Production Company M & M Productions
Executive Producer Gary Levinson
Producers Martin Bregman
 Michael Caine
 Peter Kendal
Co-producer Louis A. Stoller
Associate Producer Barney Reisz
Production Associate Daphne Spink
Unit Production Manager Barney Reisz
Location Manager Angus More Gordon
Post-production Co-ordinator Michael Klawitter
Costing Joyce Nettles
Extras: Atmos Casting
Assistant Directors John Watson
 Jamie Annett
 Beni Turkson
Screenplay Ron Hutchinson
 Based on a character created by Ted Allbeury
Director of Photography Denis Crossan
In colour
Camera Operators Pete Cavaciuti
 2nd Unit: Alister Meux
Steadicam Operator Pete Cavaciuti
Editor Seth Flaum
Production Designer Grant Hicks
Art Director Lawrence Williams
Set Dresser Karen Wakefield
Music Michael Kamen
Orchestrations Michael Kamen
 Jonathan Sacks
Supervising Music Editor Christopher S. Brooks
Music Editor Stephen McLaughlin
Costume Design Les Lansdown
Wardrobe Master: Giles Gayle
 Mistress: Lena Hansen
Make-up Artists Christine Walmsley-Cotham
 Michael Caine: Lois Burwell
 Sean Young: Julie Dartnell
Titles/Opticals Pacific Title and Optical
Supervising Sound Editor Dave Weathers
Sound Editors Peter Bergren
 Joe Earle
 Ron Evans
 Frank Fuller
 Sonya Henry
 Barbara Isaak
 Gary Lewis
 Pat McCormick
 Ralph Osborn
 Doug Kent
Supervising ADR Editor Peter Austin
ADR Editors Albert Lord

Jim Hebenstreit
Sound Recordists Terry Elms
Music: Stephen McLaughlin
 Dolby stereo
Sound Re-recordists Dean Okrand
 Mike Getlin
 Bill Thiederman
Jazz Consultants Straight No Chaser
Stunt Co-ordinator Alan Stuart
Stunts Secret Servicemen:
 Simon Crane
 Roy Alon
 Taxi Driver: Del Baker
 Clubber: Gerry Crampton
 Garcia's Driver: Jim Dowdall
 Woman Punter: Elaine Ford
 Bus Driver: Richard Hammatt
 Terrorists: Frank Henson
 Wayne Michaels
 Gareth Milne
 Patrol Car Man: Mark McBride
 Trumpet Player: Nicholas Powell
 Doorman: Lee Sheward
 Patrol Car Driver: Rocky Taylor
 Hit Man: Tip Tipping
Stunt Doubles Sean Young:
 Tracy Eddon
 Michael Caine: Mark Henson
 Bob Hoskins: Nick Hobbs
 Jack Shepherd: Andy Bradford

Cast
 Michael Caine
 Harry Anders
 Sean Young
 Stacy Mansdorf
 Ian Holm
 Sir Hector
 Bobby Short
 Buddy
 Alan Armstrong
 Detective Sergeant Osgood
 Sam Kelly
 George
 Jack Shepherd
 Stevens
 Philip Davis
 Westy
 Patricia Hayes
 Old Woman
 Alan MacNaughtan
 Lewis Mansdorf
 Mac Andrews
 Trans Cab Driver
 Todd Boyce
 Kyle
 Peter Forbes
 Medic
 Peter Gordon
 Mortuary Attendant
 Oliver Haden
 Stacy's Driver
 Philip Whitchurch
 Blackner
 Nigel Harrison
 Fleming
 Bob Hoskins
 Garcia
 Roger Monk
 Stanley Townsend
 Interrogators
 Brian Parr
 Stallholder
 Neville Phillips
 Usher

James Simmons
 Sir Hector's Aide
 Roger Sloman
 Shipping Clerk
 Mark Stewart
 Uniformed Driver
 Raymond Trickitt
 Cab Driver
 Dave Green
 Jazz Band Bass
 Anthony Kerr
 Jazz Band Vibes

Pete King
 Jazz Band Alto Sax
 Gerald Presencer
 Jazz Band Trumpet
 Charlie Watts
 Jazz Band Drums
 Steve Williamson
 Jazz Band Tenor Sax

9,436 feet
 105 minutes

London. Harry Anders, an ex-secret agent who now runs a jazz club, is rear-ended by Stacy Mansdorf, a young American who has been distracted by an urgent call on her carphone. After arguing, Harry and Stacy strike up an acquaintance and become lovers, although Harry is surprised to learn that Stacy is married to the American ambassador. Learning of his background, Stacy asks Harry to locate Kyle, her former boyfriend and the maker of the mysterious phone call.

Harry consults Osgood, a policeman friend, and learns that Kyle is hiding out in a seedy hotel. Arriving at the hotel, Harry discovers that Kyle and Osgood have been murdered and is arrested, although Stacy pulls strings to have him released. Stacy disappears and Harry tries to find out what is going on by consulting Garcia, a former colleague working as a security specialist, only to be lured to an M16 safe house by a man named Stevens and fruitlessly tortured to explain his involvement in the affair.

Harry is then warned by Sir Hector, his retired former boss, to stay away from the case, which involves international arms dealing. Garcia is murdered and Harry's club is fire-bombed, whereupon Stacy hands over the coded message from Kyle that she was taking down at the time of the accident, and Harry realises it is a serial number for a cargo shipment in the Port of London.

At the docks, Harry is chased by workmen but finds the shipment, a consignment of high-tech arms being sold on the black market by Hector, who has been embittered by his forcible retirement. Hector threatens to kill Stacy, whom he has kidnapped, but she breaks free and, in the ensuing

mêlée, Harry shoots Hector dead. Harry and Stacy declare their love for each other, but, unable to leave her husband, she returns to the U.S.

Michael Caine's appeal as a top-billed hero was established by *The Ipcress File*, in which he first played Len Deighton's nameless spy protagonist, christened Harry Palmer for the movies, plodding his wary, rain-coated way through the multiple betrayals of the espionage business. Although the main character here is allegedly taken from novels by Ted Allbeury (including *Snowball* and *The Judas Factor*), his first name (Tad) and Polish background are ditched for the more comfortably Palmerish Harry and an underwritten but over-familiar touch of post-Cold War cynicism as our hero is seen to have retreated into his jazz club from a game that no longer has any relevance.

Part of the problem is that the old tricks don't work any more, and Russell Mulcahy is so intent on staging flashily self-contained sequences that he is unaware how derivative they are – a hallucinogenic *Ipcress* torture scene (pointless, since Harry really doesn't know anything) rendered like one of Mulcahy's rock videos, some intimidation à la *Kiss Me Deadly* as Harry makes Stevens talk by smashing his beloved jazz records (annoying in that Harry magically knows where the mystery man lives), and a chase around the London docks that fills ten minutes of busy screen time before the achingly predictable revelation, also from *The Ipcress File*, that it is the hero's former boss who is behind the conspiracy.

The film also fails because Caine is frankly too old to be still convincing as a superstud action man, making it seem strange that Stacy – played by a bewildered Sean Young – should choose a lover closer in age to her tolerant but ancient husband than to herself. Despite Mulcahy's stylistics, this is a resolutely old-fashioned thriller which, in its quaint view of London (all Tower Bridge and Soho dives), seems like an inflated 50s quota quickie.

Kim Newman



A quaint view: Sean Young

Death Becomes Her

USA 1992

Director: Robert Zemeckis

Certificate
PG
Distributor
UIP
Production Company
Universal Pictures
Producers
Robert Zemeckis
Steve Starkey
Co-producer
Joan Bradshaw
Production Associate
Rick Portas
Production Co-ordinator
Jacqueline A. Shea
Unit Production Manager
Joan Bradshaw
Location Manager
Karlene Gallegly
2nd Unit Directors
Max Kleven
Ken Ralston
Casting
Karen Rea
Associate:
Donna M. Eckholdt
Extras:
Central Casting
Assistant Directors
Marty Ewing
Cherylann Martin
Dana Kuznetzkoff
2nd Unit:
Bruce Moriarty
Carla McCloskey
David D'Ovidio
Screenplay
Martin Donovan
David Koepp
Director of Photography
Dean Cundey
In colour
2nd Unit Director of Photography
Don Burgess
Underwater Director of Photography
Jack Cooperman
Camera Operators
Raymond N. Stella
2nd Unit:
Chris Squires
Video
Ian Kelly
Visual Effects Supervisor
Ken Ralston
Special Visual Effects
Industrial Light & Magic
Executive Producer:
Patricia Blau
Producer:
Debbie Denise
Post-production
Executive:
Ed L. Jones
Post-production
Co-ordinators:
Susan Adele Colletta
Shari Malyn
Lisa Vaughn
Co-ordinators:
Anne Calanchini
Sandra Almond
Williams
Art Director:
Doug Chiang
Optical Photography
Supervisors:
Bruce Vecchitto
Brad Kuehn
Editors:
Timothy Eaton
Michael McGovern
Computer Graphics
Supervisor:
Doug Smythe
Supervising Model
Maker:
Steve Gawley
Camera Supervisor:
Bruce Walters
Animation Supervisor:
Wes Takahashi

Animators:
Gordon Baker
Scott Bonnenfant
Rotoscope Supervisor:
Tom Bertino
Rotoscopers:
Jack Mongovan
Terry Molatore
Joanne Hafner
Lisa Drostova
Leslie Arvio
Debra Bainum
Camera Operators:
Patrick Turner
Peter Daulton
Selwyn Eddy III
Charlie Clavadetscher
Steve Reding
Coling Campbell
Jim Hagedorn
Optical Line-up:
Tom Rosseter
Peg Hunter
Jennifer Lee
John Whisnant
Debra Wolff
Kristen Trattner
Optical Camera
Operators:
Keith Johnson
James Lim
Kenneth Smith
Jeff Doran
Don Clark
Jon Alexander
Optical Processing:
Tim Geideman
Mike Ellis
Bob Fernley
Computer Graphics
Production Supervisor:
Judith Weaver
Artists:
Barbara Brennan
Geoff Campbell
Richard L. Cohen
Rachel Falk
Carl N. Frederick
John Horn
Sandy Houston
Sandra Ford Karpman
Laurel Klick
Jeffrey B. Light
Greg Maloney
Jim Mitchell
Ron Moreland
George Murphy
Patrick T. Myers
Joseph Pasquale
Carolyn Enslie Rendu
Stuart Robertson
Stephen Rosenbaum
John Schlag
Andrew H. Schmidt
Alex Seiden
Thomas J. Smith
Robert Weaver
Film Scanner
Supervisor:
Josh Pines
Senior Scanning
Operator:
Randall K. Bean
Scanner Operator:
George Gambetta
Matte Painting:
Mark Sullivan
Modelmakers:
Mike Cummins
Brian Germand
Mike Lynch
Marghe McMahon
Richard Miller
Alan Peterson
Mark Siegel
Chuck Wiley
Miniature Electronics
Design:
Jon Foreman
Steve Haye
Plate Photography
Co-ordinator:
Penny Runge
Production Assistant:
Tina Matthews



Not fade away: Meryl Streep, Goldie Hawn

Editor
Arthur Schmidt
Production Designer
Rick Carter
Art Director
Jim Teegarden
Set Design
Lauren Polizzi
Elizabeth Lapp
Masako Masuda
John Berger
Set Decorator
Jackie Carr
Set Dressers
Max Brehme
Steven Jarrard
Scott Leslie
Bruce Fuselier
William Wright
Production Illustrators
Thomas Cranham
David Lowery
Marty Kline
Special Effects Supervisor
Michael Lantieri
Special Effects
Foreman:
Don Elliot
Brian Tipton
Tom Pakk
Jon Porter
Gregory Tippi
Wayne Rabouin
Dan Ossello
2nd Unit:
John Grey
Music
Alan Silvestri
Music Performed by
Violin:
Stuart Canin
Orchestrations
William Ross
Music Editor
Ken Karman
Songs
"Me" by Geoffrey
Aymar, Martin
Donovan, David Koepp
Choreography
Operator:
Randall K. Bean
Costume Design
Joanna Johnston
Wardrobe
Supervisor:
Pam Wise
Linda Redmon
Diana Wilson
Gilbert Hernandez
Deborah Hopper
Paul St John
Patricia Bersci
Make-up
Design:
Dick Smith
Bruce Willis:
Michael Mills
Meryl Streep:
Roy Helland
Goldie Hawn:
Tom Case
Additional:
Greg Nelson

Body:
Nadege Schonfeld
Special Body Effects
Tom Woodruff Jnr
Alec Gillis
Prosthetics
Supervisor:
Kevin Haney
Goldie Hawn:
Lance Anderson
Titles
R/Greenberg Associates
Opticals
Cinema Research
Supervising Sound Editors
Charles L. Campbell
Donald Malouf
Sound Editors
Larry Carow
Jeff Clark
Albert Gasser
Niels Jensen
Howard Nieman
ADR Supervisor
Larry Singer
ADR Editors
Tom Whiting
Corinne Sessarego
Sound Recordists
William B. Kaplan
Mike Boudry
Albert Romero
Foley:
Carolyn Tapp
Marilyn Graf
Sandra Garcia
ADR: Doc Kane
Music: Dennis Sands
2nd Unit:
John Pritchett
Dolby stereo
Sound Re-recordists
Rick Alexander
Jim Bolt
Andy D'Addario
Loop Group
Mickie T. McGowan
Joe Baker
Jennifer Darling
Burr De Benning
Bill Faruer
Laurie Faso
Efrain Figueroa
Louisa Leschin
June Kyoko Lu
Sherry Lynn
Lawrence Steffan
Foley Artists
Kevin Bartnof
Hilda Hodges
Production Assistants
Carol Bawer
Roby Marshall
Adam Beason
Julia Bartholomew
Christine Norton
Josh Lusby
Sharon Felder
Steven Boyd
Stunt Co-ordinator
Walter Scott
Stunt Doubles
Bruce Willis:
Keij Johnston

Meryl Streep:
Denise Lynn Roberts
Goldie Hawn:
Barbara Klein
Debbie Lynne Ross
Denise Lynne Roberts
Stand-ins
Meryl Streep:
Pauline Arthur Loomis
Bruce Willis:
Johnny Johnson
Goldie Hawn:
Melody McCord
Dog Trainer
Gary Gero

Cast
Meryl Streep
Madeline Ashton
Bruce Willis
Ernest Menville
Goldie Hawn
Helen Sharp
Isabella Rossellini
Lisle Von Rhuman
Ian Ogilvy
Chagall
Adam Storke
Dakota
Nancy Fish
Rose
Alaina Reed Hall
Psychologist
Michelle Johnson
Anna
Mary Ellen Trainor
Vivian Adams
William Frankfather
Mr Franklin
John Ingle
Eulogist
Clement Von Frankenstein
Opening Man
Petrea Burchard
Opening Woman
Jim Jansen
2nd Man
Mimi Kennedy
2nd Woman
Paulo Tocha
Landlord
Mark Davenport
Thomas Murphy
Eviction Cops
Michael Mills
Police Officer
Sonia Jackson
Jill C. Klein
Jean Pflieger
Debra Jo Rupp
Carol Ann Susi
Kay Yamamoto
Psychiatric Patients
Jacquelyn K. Koch
Messenger Girl
Anya Longwell
Chagall Receptionist
Stuart Mabray
Chagall Security
Colleen Morris
Starlet
Jonathan Silverman
Jay Norman

Meg Wittner
Woman at Book Party
Carrie Yazel
Girl at Dakota's
Michael A. Nickles
John Enos
Dan Clark
Fabio
Joel Beeson
Lisle's Bodyguards
Catherine Bell
Lisle Body Double
Donna Baltron
Madeline Body Double
Ron Stein
Elvis
Bonnie Cahoon
Greta Garbo
Stephanie Anderson
Marilyn Monroe
Bob Swain
Andy Warhol
Eric Clark
James Dean
Dave Brock
Jim Morrison
Lydia Peterkoch
Blonde with Jim
Morrison
Phillip Cooper
Ernest Harada
Coroners
Susan Kellerman
2nd Doctor
Kevin Caldwell
Alex P. Hernandez
Medical Technicians
Donna Ekholdt
Tammy Gantz
Melissa Martin
Sobbing Nuns
Jeff Adkins
Cheryl Baxter
Cameron English
Ed Forsyth
Bob Gaynor
Don Hesser
Michael Higgins
Kenneth Hughes
Kenneth Knaff
Glean Lewis
Keith McDaniel
Charles McGowan
Regan Patno
Lacy Darryl Phillips
Matt Sergott
Paul Thorpe
Sergio Trujillo
Dancers
Randy Crenshaw
Jon Joyce
Jerry Whitman
Singers
Gina Acevedo
Norman Cabrera
Guy Himer
Christopher Hunt
David Nelson
Wayne Toth
N. Brock Winkless IV
Puppeteers

1978. Novelist Helen Sharp and her fiancé, the eminent plastic surgeon Ernest Menville, attend the Broadway premiere of *Songbird*, which stars Helen's best friend, Madeline Ashton. The show is a dismal flop but Ernest becomes enamoured of the lead, and eventually ditches Helen to marry Madeline. Seven years later, Helen is still obsessively plotting her revenge against the two, and is taken away to a psychiatric hospital. Another seven years later, a less than happy Ernest and Madeline are living in Hollywood: he is now a mortician and she has not been in a film for ages.

The couple are surprised to receive an invitation to a launch for Helen's latest book, and Madeline pays a preparatory visit to her beauty salon. The proprietor, Chagall, advises her to visit his friend, Lisle Von Rhuman, for a very special and expensive treatment, but Madeline declines. At the launch, much to Madeline's disappointment, Helen appears to be youthful, happy and successful, and even flirts with Ernest. After visiting her young lover, and finding that even he is fickle, Madeline decides to visit Lisle Von Rhuman, who offers her an elixir of life which she gratefully imbibes. The mysterious Lisle then warns her to take extra care of herself, and tells her that she should disappear after ten years.

Helen has meanwhile paid a visit to Ernest and persuaded him to murder Madeline. When Madeline returns, she and Ernest argue, and Madeline tumbles downstairs and breaks her neck. Ernest believes her to be dead and phones Helen for advice. But much to his dismay, Madeline comes back to life. Ernest takes her to hospital, where - although her heart has stopped beating, her neck is twisted the wrong way, and she is technically dead - she seems quite well. The odd couple return home, where Madeline, suspecting that something has been going on between Ernest and Helen, shoots the latter. Helen survives - despite the fact that a hole has been blasted through her middle - and the two women, recognising that they have taken the same cure, make peace.

Ernest uses his embalming skills to paint and patch them up. Helen and Madeline decide that they can weather their unusual situation as long as Ernest is around, so they take him to Lisle's. They arrive to find that she is throwing a party for all her clients. Ernest is offered the elixir but refuses to drink it and escapes into the night. Thirty-seven years later, Ernest dies. At his funeral, the priest eulogises his philanthropic life and pays tribute to the large family that he has left behind. As they leave, Madeline and Helen trip on the steps of the church and break into many pieces.

"I don't want to become one of the living dead in Beverly Hills", protests Ernest, as he refuses the magic vial of rejuvenating potion. He has just been to a party in Lisle Von Rhuman's Gothic extravaganza of a home, perched on a bare mountain over-

◀ looking a twinkling La-La Land, where the guest list runs the gamut of Hollywood's 'living' and forever-young dead: Marilyn Monroe, Jim Morrison, Elvis, Warhol and Garbo. All Lisle's previous clients, they presumably did the right thing, to avoid arousing suspicion, and disappeared ten years after taking the elixir (the screenwriters can't resist the obvious quip about the regularly-sighted Elvis not sticking to the rules).

Director Robert Zemeckis and writers Martin Donovan and David Koepp have glamourised the zombie movie with a touch of industrial light & magic, and then cross-bred it with a *Rich and Famous*-style camp melodrama in which the women's friendship is patently only skin-deep.

In this satire on the West Coast craze for youth and beauty, the zombies don't feed on brains but on their own ludicrous vanity. It is depicted as a particularly female preoccupation, of course, with the part of the eternal vamp Lisle fittingly going to the actress and Lancôme cosmetics model Isabella Rossellini, here looking like a newly minted Theda Bara. But it is a female preoccupation that is perpetuated by men, whether they be the consumers of images (Ernest, the star-struck Madeline fan) or producers (Ernest, the plastic surgeon-turned-corpsé rouger).

The body is the comic object of the film, a plasticine entity that can be painted, moulded and padded out with prosthetics or twisted back-to-front, as some of the more intricate special effects allow it to be. Zemeckis adapts the strange bodily acrobatics or 'morphing' technique of the low-budget horror satire *Society*, though *Death Becomes Her* lacks that film's ripe Rabelaisian connotations. But this is for a 'PG' audience, and its comedy of the body fantastic keeps to the safely obvious, to metaphors of the 'I can see right through you' variety – as in the scene where Madeline surveys the duplicitous Helen's bullet-hollowed torso.

But even if it is somewhat sanitised, there is still an enjoyable vulgarity and cruelty to the film, beginning with a wonderfully tacky musical number from *Songbird* (a song and dance version of *Sweet Bird of Youth*), which is nearly on a par with Mel Brooks' "Springtime for Hitler" number in *The Producers*. Meryl Streep and Goldie Hawn sustain the trashy tone as they gleefully attack their roles, with even a touch of Davis and Crawford in their feuding and a hint of *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* in the final scene as the two snap at each other after the funeral while they fall apart, the paint peeling from their cracked and gargoy-like features. Bruce Willis is equally persuasive as the pathetic soak Ernest, a "fat, bald Republican wuss" as Madeline calls him. This may be the unkindest cut in *Death Becomes Her* when one recalls that Willis recently attempted to use his star allure to help revivify the campaign of George Bush.

Lizzie Francke

Electric Moon

United Kingdom 1991

Director: Pradip Krishen

Certificate

15

Distributor

Winstone

Production Company

Grapevine Media

For Channel 4

Television

In association with

Times Television

Producer

Sundee Singh Bedi

Production Co-ordinators

Satyajit Sarkar

Delhi:

Varsha Bedi

Production Manager

Padma Iyer

Location Manager

Sanjay Malik

Post-production

Co-ordinator

Film Finance Post-

production Services

Assistant Directors

Tigmanshu Dhulia

Habib Faisal

Screenplay

Arundhati Roy

Director of Photography

Giles Nuttgens

Colour

Technicolor

Camera Operators

Mike Barker

Giles Nuttgens

Editor

Pradip Krishen

Production Designer

Arundhati Roy

Set Dresser

Naheed Bilgrami

Wildlife Models

Carl D'Silva

Music/Music Director

Simeon Venkov

Music Performed by

Basaya Khan

Zakab Khan

Deepak Castellino

Sanjee Saith

Songs

"Sun Sahiba Sun",

"Paisa Paisa",

"Fast Cars"

Wardrobe Managers

P.K. Murali

Rohini Khosla

Make-up Supervisor

Simon Tytherleigh

Sound Editor

Ernest Marsh

Sound Recordists

Robert Taylor

Associate:

Dilip Subramaniam

Production Assistant

Debal Bannerjee

Cast

Roshan Seth

Ranveer

Naseeruddin Shah

Rambhuj Goswami

Leela Naidu

Socks/Sukanya

Gerson Da Cunha

Bubbles/Raja Ran

Bikram Singh

Raghubir Yadav

Boltoo

Alice Spivak

Louise Robinson

Frances Holm

Emma Lane

James Fleet

Simon Lidell

Francesca Brill

Phoebe Fenton

Gareth Forwood

Ian

Surendra Rajan

Johnston

Malcolm Jamieson

Thierry

Barbara Lott

Mrs Ellis

Vageesh Singh

Nathoo

Mahavir Bhullar

Gaj Singh

Arjun Raina

V.K. Sethi

Alakhnandan

Policeman

S.K.S. Mani

Film Producer

Bhagyalakshmi

Dancer

Nazim Hussain

Tiwari

Alberto Canetta

Rosso Chicogna

Khumi Lal Maina

Lal Singh

Shashank Dabral

Binky

Bhaloo Laloo Master

Bear

Kalyani

Ramu

Elephants

Amrita Udghata

Narendra Kumar

A.M. Khan

Pallavi Bharati

Chakradhar Jena

R.K. Namdeo

Dustly Knisely

R.K. Datta

Dominic Than

Radhika Laukaran

G. Vishvanath

Ram Karan Bhopa

Gholi Devi Bhopi

Rakesh Raekwar

Girish Solanki

Ram Ratten Singh

Gopal Yadav

Rekha Joshi

Hal Salvwasser

Rita Rani Das

Jay Knisely

Sanjay Sharma

Joanna Van Gruisen

Sanjit Kumar

K.S. Shinde

Satish Naidu

Lakshmi Maliya

Stephen Chang

Nareesh Kashyap

Sylvie Ravindran

Nitin Bharadwaj

Tigmanshu Dhulia

Nutan Surya

Vijaya Nayyar

Vineet Kumar

Vimla Thakur

Yashwant Nikosi

V. Hallikerimath

9,235 feet

103 minutes

Subtitles

Ranveer, brother of a former Maharajah, Raja Singh, picks up a group of tourists to stay at the Machan, a holiday lodge inside a national park in India. He is annoyed to find his way blocked by a guard, demanding an entry fee for the tourists because the park's new director, Rambhuj Goswami, has decreed that every guest must pay. Insisting that his entourage is exempt, Ranveer bluffs his way through, and introduces the 'guests' to the Maharajah (known to friends as "Bubbles") and to their sister Sukanya ("Socks").

The holidaymakers include Louise Robinson, a rich American divorcee, her companion Emma Lane, and Simon Lidell, a British ornithologist. The Fentons, a bickering British couple, have stayed on longer than most, mainly because Phoebe Fenton is having an affair with Bubbles (while her husband Ian tries to complete his novel). At first it seems that life at the Machan will continue as normal; however, it soon becomes apparent that Goswami is not going to co-operate with the Singhs. As the tourists are shown buffaloes supposedly killed by tigers (in fact, they've been slaughtered by Machan servants), and listen to the servants, including Boltoo and Johnston, recount their close shaves with various big cats, the director insists that government regulations be strictly adhered to.

The guests meanwhile become increasingly restless with the additional red tape, and Louise is further put out when her advances to Bubbles are rejected in favour of Phoebe's. As the tourists depart prematurely, and with the faithful Johnston and Boltoo defecting to the Park Director's camp, Ranveer suggests that the Machan's facilities should be offered as a movie location.

But even this venture is sabotaged when Goswami insists that shooting permits must be obtained beforehand. He also confiscates Bubbles' models of bears and tigers, as well as various animal-sound tapes which the Singhs have been using to fool their customers. Faced with failure, Ranveer insists that the family have a future as cultural ambassadors at a Scandinavian festival. With some reluctance, Bubbles joins a troupe of costumed 'ambassadors' on an Air India plane, dressed as the Maharajah of Machan.

Following on the heels of the adventurous *Masala* and the surefooted *Immaculate Conception*, *Electric Moon* is a more straightforwardly comic take on Western perceptions of the Raj and the supposed romance of the East. Rajah's careful drawings of animal footprints, the camouflaged tiger observation posts (complete with artificial lighting, the so-called electric moon of the title), the noble ancestry of the Singh dynasty are all ruthlessly undercut by the knowledge that the servants are waving stuffed tiger tails in the bushes, and that Ranveer's 'family' is actually a disgruntled bourgeois

housewife in Birmingham.

Of the three films, *Electric Moon* proves the least satisfying, mainly due to an opening half hour which wastes too much time setting up its soft colonial targets. Louise Robinson (a widow hunting for perimenopausal sex trophies), Phoebe Fenton (foul-mouthed hippy finding sexual fulfilment by going native), husband Ian (waspish but sexually supine novelist), and Simon Lidell, the twitty public-school ornithologist, are almost racist and sexist stereotypes. Their hosts, by comparison, are established in deft little behavioural snapshots.

The film's commitment to putting the boot into the Europeans (and one American) is underlined by its use of standard four-letter translations for virtually every term of abuse uttered in hindi or punjabi (both languages employ a colourful array of swear words, and a simple 'fuck off' or 'sod off' hardly does justice to their onomatopoeic richness or sexual crassness). But by continually subtitled the abuse in the bluntest terms, *Electric Moon* unsettles audience expectations in an unpleasant way. Combined with the repeated jokes about gastrointestinal discomfort, it lends the film an unnecessarily abrasive tone and briefly raises the unsavoury prospect of a merger between the *National Geographic* and *National Lampoon*.

Happily, with the arrival of Goswami, the humour takes a sharp turn, in the direction of Ealing. A collection of pukka stiff upper lips, the Singh family's attempts to wrestle free of the bureaucratic red tape being wound around them can justifiably be set alongside the struggles of the populace of Pimlico or the supporters of the Titfield Thunderbolt. The connection is emphasised by the ludicrously two nicknames the Singhs have for each other, and the way their initial contempt for Goswami is derived as much from their faith in good manners and correct grammar as from their inability to pick up on the changing social mores of India.

But despite the climactic riposte to traditional Ealing sensibilities (the Rajah's ultimate fate is not an aristocratic reprieve but a humiliating journey in the company of a performing bear and extras dressed as Hindu gods), the film fails to engage with specifically Indian targets, namely the feudal socio-economic system which sustains an astonishing level of poverty and illiteracy.

This is underlined by the film's inability to extend the servant roles beyond their function as humorous foils. Both Boltoo and Johnston enjoy their comic moments, but their jolly participation in the Raj masquerade is never counterpointed by any philosophy beyond grinning-it-and-bearing-it and making-a-quick-rupee. It's a failure which highlights the central paradox in *Electric Moon*'s satiric intentions, that is, its heavy reliance on Western cinema to provide the artistic lead.

Farrah Anwar

Elenya

United Kingdom 1992

Director: Steve Gough

Certificate
PG

Distributor
BFI

Production Companies
Frankfurter Film
(Germany)/S4C (Wales)
In association with
British Film Institute
Filmian
ZDF

Executive Producers
Ben Gibson
Michael Smeaton
Dafydd Huw Williams

Executives-in-charge of Production
BFI:
Angela Topping
S4C:
Ian Jones
ZDF:
Brigitte Kramer

Producer
Heidi Ulmke

Line Producer
Heike Richter-Karst

Associate Producer
Gareth Lloyd Williams

Production Co-ordinator
Beate Balser

Production Managers
Anja Giesing
Wales:
Gruff Owen
2nd Unit:
Sally Randle

Location Manager
Rhydian John

Post-production Managers
Eliza Mellor
Sandie Whittaker

Assistant Directors
Dafydd Arwyn Jones
Markus Herling
Marc Schuhmacher
2nd Unit:
Cilla Ware
Sue Jones

Screenplay
Steve Gough

Director of Photography
Patrick Duval

Editor
Alan Smith

Production Designer
Hayden Pearce

Set Dresser
Frazer Pearce

Music
Simon Fisher Turner

Costume Design
Aideen Morgan

Make-up Artists
Mary Weicha
2nd Unit:
Janet Church

Titles
Capital FX

Sound Editors
Peter Baldock
Catherine Creed
Gerard McCann

Sound Recordists
Simon Hupp
2nd Unit:
George Richards

Sound Re-recorder
Paul Hamblin

Foley Artists
Jack Stew
Pauline Bennion

Creative Consultant
Aleksandra Lech

Cast
Margaret John
Old Elenya
Pascale Delafouge Jones
Young Elenya
Seiriol Toms
Glyn
Sue Jones Davies
Maggie
Iago Wynn Jones
Sidney
Llio Millward
Schoolteacher
Catrin Llywd
Head Teacher
Edward Elyn Jones
Phil
Ioan Meredith
Sidney's Father
Klaus Behrendt
Franz
Eiry Palfrey
Sidney's Mother
Pauline Yates
Elenya's Voice

7,348 feet
82 minutes

An elderly woman flies to Britain to visit the site of her most traumatic childhood experiences. Back in 1940, she was a twelve-year-old living with her Aunt Maggie in the Welsh countryside... Elenya has never known her Italian mother, but the villagers and even her aunt are mistrustful of her, regarding her as an enemy alien. Much to both Elenya's and Aunt Maggie's dismay, her father leaves home to search for his wife.

Maggie, bitter and introspective, has nothing to offer her niece, and Elenya is distraught when she learns that her father has joined the army. Elenya's only comfort is rambling in the nearby woods. One day, after a German plane is shot down, she stumbles upon Franz, an airman who escaped the crash. He is caught in a tree by his parachute, injured and unable to move. Elenya cuts him down and decides to look after him, risking the village's wrath. She steals food from her aunt, takes her father's clothes, and even pilfers chemicals from the local pharmacy. Although neither speaks the other's language, a bond soon grows up between the wounded

German and his helper.

Elenya is fascinated by Franz, seeing in him traces of her departed father, and she begins to fall in love with him. But her woodland retreat is discovered by an inquisitive schoolfriend, and one afternoon, she is followed into the forest by a gang of schoolchildren who force her to admit she is hiding somebody. When they come upon Franz, they first of all presume him to be a deserter, but after finding his gun, they realise he is one of the enemy. They run away to tell their parents.

The local constabulary and home guard form a lynch mob, and come looking for Franz with dogs in tow. Elenya tries to help him escape, but he is too weak to make much headway. He knocks her to the ground and stumbles upstream. Here the dogs catch up with him, ripping him to pieces... Back in the present, the old woman looks at the spot where her first love came to such a grisly end.

Elenya had such a complex gestation that it is a wonder the film was completed at all. Steve Gough's big screen directorial debut, a period piece set in wartime Britain, it was shot simultaneously in two languages, English and Welsh, was funded with British and German money (and not very much at that, a mere £700,000), and had to blend together an international cast and crew. To its credit, Gough's movie is compact, finely crafted (it looks as if it cost considerably more than its stated budget), has a precise sense of time and place (with some exquisite location photography of Wales, all wind, rain, bracken, sheep and hills), and evokes a child's troubled universe efficiently. As Elenya, Pascale Delafouge Jones is in virtually every scene, and gives a performance that has probably not been equalled in the British Cinema since Hayley Mills discovered Alan Bates and mistook him for Jesus in Bryan Forbes' *Whistle Down the Wind*.

In a way, *Elenya* stands as a rustic counterpart to Terence Davies' meditations on his Liverpool childhood. In its attempt to depict 1940s Britain, it employs the same 'bleach by-pass' process employed on *Distant Voices, Still Lives*, which gives it a resolutely sombre visual tone: there is a complete absence of primary colours; interiors all have grey or brownish hues – the overall effect is like a hybrid between colour and black-and-white. (Making a film through a child's eyes seems to be a British way to compensate for lack of budget. Just as the child's memory and imagination can transform the everyday and banal, making it magical, BFI directors, whether it be Gough, Davies or Bill Douglas, operating in straitened circumstances, seek to capture a sense of innocence, awe and wonder through the lens that will disguise a film's more material shortcomings).

But although *Elenya* takes flight as a piece of pastoral film-making, there's no disguising the flimsiness in other respects of Gough's tale. The relationship between the injured German pilot

and the young girl who befriends him and hides him away – the girl's burgeoning curiosity about adult life, about sex, death and duplicity, and the German's diffident response – is handled sensitively enough. Gough encourages the two leads, who didn't speak the same language, to express themselves through looks and gesture, with dialogue kept to a minimum.

But one can't help recalling the critic who famously remarked of the 1940s British melodrama, *Caravan*, that its leading man, who was hidden away for much of the time in a cave, "managed to preserve a spotless elaboration of dress...without visible washing facilities". That same critic would probably have difficulty with *Elenya*. The German officer, despite being fed little more than an orange and the odd hunk of stale bread, manages to stay hale and hearty, remains clean shaven, and looks quite dapper in Elenya's father's shirt. But neither he nor Elenya take the trouble to dress his wounded leg properly. Furthermore, we are given little sense of time passing; it is not clear whether weeks or months elapse while he is hiding.

The film is a curious blend of naturalism and fantasy. On the one hand, Gough seems possessed of that fetish for detail which insists on making sure the right kind of brown sauce sits on the table. On the other, he is keen to broach Elenya's fantasy world, depicting her nightmares: the oneiric quality of the photography in the woods, with its use of shadow and slow motion, is at odds with the 'realism' that dominates elsewhere. Gough's story is essentially a rough-hewn fairy tale, emphasising the violence, brutality and xenophobia that lurks beneath the surface in a seemingly serene Welsh rural community.

The film has the odd truly startling sequence, for example the moment when Elenya discovers the airman in the forest, when what she presumes to be rain dripping on the leaves turns out to be his blood. But these self-consciously poetic moments make little headway against the cumbersome flashback structure, which introduces us to the elderly Elenya fifty years after the events she describes and fatally undermines the story's spontaneity.

Geoffrey Macnab



Down the wind: Pascale Delafouge Jones

Midnight Sting

USA 1992

Director: Michael Ritchie

Certificate
15

Distributor
UIP

Production Companies
Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
Electric Films

Producer
Robert Schaffel

Co-producer
Youssef Vahabzadeh

Line-producer
Art Schaefer

Associate Producers
Sharon Roesler
Steven McKay

Production Co-ordinator
Chip Fowler

Unit Production Manager
Art Schaefer

Location Manager
Mark Cottrell

Casting
Rick Pagano
Sharon Bialy
Debi Manwiller
Voice:
Barbara Harris

Extras:
The Casting Group

Assistant Directors
Tom Mack David Kelley
Dan Coffie
C. C. Barnes

Screenplay
Steven McKay
Based on the novel
The Diggstown Ringers
by Leonard Wise

Director of Photography
Gerry Fisher

Colour
DeLuxe

Camera Operators
Bill Roe
'B' Camera:
Dennis Smith
George B. Stephenson

Graphics Consultant
Duncan Kennedy

Editor
Don Zimmerman

Production Designer
Steve Hendrickson

Art Director
Okowitz

Set Design
Gregory Van Horn
Michael Devine

Set Decorator
Barbara Drake

Production Illustrator
Rusty Smith

Lead Scenic Artist
Michael Thomas Daigle

Special Effects Supervisor
Mark R. Lillenthal

Music
James Newton Howard

Music Performed by
Guitar:
Marc Bonilla
Orchestrations
Brad Dechter
Music Editor
Ellen Segal

Songs
"Mountain Music"
by Randy Owen,
performed by Alabama;
"Jesus My Jesus"
by Carol Cymbala,
performed by the
New Testament Baptist
Church Choir 2;
"My Blue Condition"
by Roger Brown, Carl
Jackson Viperman,
performed by Dana
McVicker; "Home is
Where the Heart Is"
by and performed
by Michael Stanton

Costume Design
Wayne A. Finkelman

Costume Supervisor
Luke W. Reichle

Set:
Eden E. Clark
Sybil Gray
Melinda Leeson
Lisa Erndt

Make-up
Key/Prosthetic:
Ken Chase
James Woods:
Deborah LaMia
Denaver
Louis Gossett Jr.:
Gigi Coker
Artist:
Dennis Glass

Titles/Opticals
Pacific Title

Supervising Sound Editor
Don Hall

Sound Editors
Kirk Schuler
Don S. Walden
John O. Wilde

ADR Editor
R. J. Kizer

Foley Editors
Harry Cheney
David Williams

Sound Recordists
Kim Harris Orntz
Gary Ritchie

ADR:
Thomas J. O'Connell
Foley:
Jackson Schwartz
Music: Robert Schaper
Dolby stereo

Sound Re-recorder
Donald O. Mitchell
Rick Hart
Frank Montano

Foley Artists
Zane Bruce
Joe Sabella

Technical Adviser
Benny Urquidez

Production Assistants
Jill Schaffel
Robert Schick
Sarah Knight

Fight Co-ordinators
James Nickerson
Bobby Bass

Stunts
Steven Lambert
Chuck Waters
Alex Desir
Jeff Dashnaw
Denvorvell Collier

Cast
James Woods
Gabriel Byrne
Louis Gossett Jr.
"Honey" Roy Palmer
Bruce Dern
John Gillion
Oliver Platt
Fitz
Heather Graham
Emily Forrester
Randall "Tex" Cobb
Wolf Forrester
Thomas Wilson Brown
Robby Gillon
Duane Davis
Hambone Busby
Willie Green
Hammerhead Hagan
Orestes Malacena
Victor Corsini
Kim Robillard
Sheriff Stennis
John Short
Corney "Buster"
Robbins
Michael McGrady
Frank Mangrum
Roger Hewlett
Sam Lester
Rocky Peppi
Buck Holland
Jeff Benson
Tank Miller
James Carver
Billy Hargrove
Frank Collison
Prison Guard

Marshall Bell
Warden Bates
Raymond Turner
Slim Busby
Wilhelm Von Homburg
Charles Macum Diggs
George D. Wallace
Bob Ferris
John Walter Davis
Chet Willis
Alex Garcia
Minoso Torres
Cyndi James Gossett
Mary Palmer
Kenneth White
Ben Culver
David Fresco
Fish
Benny Urquidez
Referee

Jeremy Roberts
Sonny
Michael DeLorenzo
Paulo
Troy A. Smith
Larry Ham
Betting Guards
David Candrea
Coach
José Alcázar
Victor Koliakos
Boxing Kids
Nelly Bly
Emily's Friend
Laura Mae Tate
Marcy
Kevin La Rosa
Helicopter Pilot

8,805 feet
98 minutes

Original US title: Diggstown

While serving a term at Winfield Prison, Georgia, con man Gabriel Caine runs a lucrative racket helping other prisoners escape. In order to cover the latest break-out, he stages a bare-knuckle fight between Wolf Forrester and the brutal Minoso Torres. Wolf, badly beaten but consoled by his pay-off, tells Caine about his nearby home town, Diggstown, where big-money unofficial prize fights are staged. Boss of Diggstown is John Gillon, former manager of legendary heavyweight Charles Macum Diggs; Gillon made his killing by drugging Diggs and betting heavily against him.

On his release, Caine and his partner, the naive-seeming Fitz, arrive in Diggstown and, with backing from Miami mobster Victor Corsini, set up a \$1m bet with Gillon: their chosen heavyweight will beat any ten local fighters Gillon nominates, in successive bouts within twenty-four hours. Caine's champion is a former associate, veteran boxer "Honey" Roy Palmer, who lets himself be persuaded despite previous bad experiences with Caine.

While Palmer trains, Caine sets about eliminating as many of Gillon's fighters as he can reach - including brothers Slim and Hambone Busby, whom he bribes to lose. With the help of Wolf's sister Emily, who works in the local bank, he discovers the full extent of Gillon's wealth, and gradually ups the ante to two-and-a-half million dollars, despite Corsini's warning of the consequences if he loses. On the day of the fight, Palmer's first serious opposition comes from Hambone; Gillon has found out about the bribe, and threatens to hang Slim if Hambone doesn't win. Hambone fights desperately but loses, and Slim dies.

As the bouts continue, Palmer remains undefeated but gradually weakens, especially after meeting the massive Tank Miller. For the ninth bout, Gillon reveals his secret weapon: Hammerhead Hagan, the only man who ever beat Palmer in the ring. But the sight of the brain-damaged Diggs, seated impassively in the audience, gives Palmer the strength to win. Gillon's final champion proves to be Minoso Torres, on special release from Winfield Prison. Palmer is about to go down when Caine gives a prearranged signal and Torres throws the fight. Palmer is declared the winner, and the ruined Gillon is flooded by Hambone.

Fast, kinetic, mobile, there's no doubt that boxing - whatever the ethical objections to it as a violent public spectacle - lends itself like no other sport to being filmed. And if *Midnight Sting* lacks the tragic dimension of the greats of the genre - *Body and Soul*, say, or *Raging Bull* - it never for a moment risks being dull. Ten bouts fought one after the other might sound like a recipe for monotony, but Michael Ritchie and his scriptwriter, Steven McKay, skilfully differentiate each fight, building or relieving the tension as required.

What the film doesn't have - surprisingly, for a scam movie - is much complexity of plot. There's a neat double twist at the end, but otherwise nothing of the multiple swerves and false perspectives, fooling the audience no less than the characters, that David Mamet worked into *House of Games*. Various plot strands are left hanging around looking for something useful to do, as are several of the cast - in particular Heather Graham, with a thankless token-woman role that consists mainly of coming on sexy in tight shorts. Even given a less underwritten and underdeveloped part, though, she might have had trouble holding her own against the three male leads, who all flesh out their roles with relaxed professionalism.

'Relaxed professionalism', indeed, might sum up *Midnight Sting* as whole. It's hardly necessary by now to point out that the wry, satirical bite of such Ritchie films as *The Candidate* or *Smile* is no longer in evidence, but in other ways *Midnight Sting* represents a return to form after such flaccid offerings as *Fletch* and *The Golden Child*. Shrewdly paced, likeable and often exciting, *Midnight Sting* reworks the conventions of its genre in ways offbeat enough to be intriguing, if never really disturbing. It's perhaps unfair to recall how Ritchie once, in *Prime Cut*, dared to push a genre subject so much closer to the dangerous edge.

Philip Kemp



Nearing the edge: Louis Gossett Jr

Mo' Money

USA 1992

Director: Peter Macdonald

Certificate

15

Distributor

Columbia TriStar

Production Company

Columbia

A Wife N' Kids

production

Executive Producers

Damon Wayans

Eric L. Gold

Producer

Michael Rachmil

Co-producer

Carl Craig

Production Co-ordinator

Mary K. Perko

Unit Production Manager

Roland G. Smith

Location Manager

Bob Hudgins

Casting

Aleta Chappelle

Assistant Directors

Tyrone L. Mason

Warren R. Turner

Simone Farber

Screenplay

Damon Wayans

Director of Photography

Don Burgess

In colour

Camera Operator

Chris Squires

Editor

Hubert C.

de La Boulle

Production Designer

William Arnold

Set Design

James Nezda

Set Decorator

Michael Claypool

Storyboard Artist

Brick Mason

Special Effects

Tom Ryba

Music

Jay Gruska

Music Editors

Eeda Kitto

Jeffrey Charbonneau

Songs

"Money Can't Buy You Love" by James Harris III, Terry Lewis, Ralph Tresvant, performed by Ralph Tresvant; "Mo' Money Groove" by James Harris III, Terry Lewis, performed by Mo' Money Allstars, Damon Wayans, Johnny Gill, Ralph Tresvant, Krush, Lo-Key; "Get Off My Back" by Hank Shocklee, Keith Shocklee, Gary G-Wiz, Flavor Flav, performed by Public Enemy featuring Flavor Flav; "Ice Cream Dream" by James Harris III, Terry Lewis, MClyte, performed by MClyte; "The Best Things in Life Are Free" by James Harris III, Terry Lewis, Michael Bivins, Ronnie DeVoe, Ralph Tresvant, performed by Luther Vandross, Janet Jackson, Bell Biv DeVoe, Ralph Tresvant; "A Job Ain't Nuthin' But Work" by Lance Alexander, Tony Tolbert, James Harris III, Terry Lewis, Darron Story, Big Daddy Kane, performed by Big Daddy Kane, Lo-Key; "My Dear" by James Harris III, Terry Lewis, Ricky Kinchen, Homer O'Dell, Stokely Williams, Jeffrey Allen,

Keri Lewis, Larry

Waddell, performed

by Mint Condition;

"I Adore You" by James

Harris III, Terry Lewis,

Caron Wheeler,

performed by Caron

Wheeler; "Joy" by

Lance Alexander, Tony

Tolbert, performed by

Sounds of Blackness;

"The New Style", by

James Harris III, Terry

Lewis, performed by

Jimmy Jam, Terry

Lewis; "Let's Get

Together (So Groovy

Now)" by James Harris

III, Terry Lewis, Tony

Tolbert, performed by

Krush; "Forever Love"

by Mark Calderon,

Sam Watters, Kevin

Thorton, Byron

Abrams, James Harris

III, Terry Lewis,

performed by Color

Me Badd; "Let's Just

Run Away" by Lance

Alexander, Tony

Tolbert, James Harris

III, Terry Lewis,

performed by Johnny

Gill; "I Got It" by

Richard Penniman,

performed by Little

Richard; "Brother Will"

by Garry Johnson,

Mark Haynes, Frank

Stribbling, James

Harris III, Terry Lewis,

performed by The

Harlem Yacht Club;

"Keya Rinia" by Ali

Baba/Gana, performed

by Ali Baba; "Poison"

by Elliott Straite

Costume Design

Michelle Cole

Wardrobe

Supervisor:

Gamila Mariana

Fakhry

Set:

Susan Michael

Kaufmann

Make-up

Cyndi Reece-Thorne

Title Design

Douy Swofford

Opticals

Pacific Title

Supervising Sound Editors

Tom McCarthy

Roxanne Jones

Sound Editors

Mark Gordon

Bob O'Brien

Ian MacGregor-Scott

ADR Editor

David B. Cohn

Sound Recordists

Russell Williams II

Music:

Greg Townley

Dolby stereo

Sound Re-recordists

Gregory Watkins

John Stephens

Bill W. Benton

Foley

Jackson Schwartz

Stunt Co-ordinator

Bob Minor

Stunts

Usaum Elam

Jack Gill

Rick Le Feuvre

Dwayne McGee

Rita Minor

Cast

Damon Wayans

Johnny Stewart

Stacey Dash

Amber Evans

Joe Santos

Lieutenant Raymond

Walsh

John Diehl

Keith Heading

Harry J. Lennix

Tom Dilton

Marlon Wayans

Seymour Stewart

Mark Beltzman

Chris Fields

Quincy Wong

Eddie

Kevin Casey

Lloyd

Larry Brandenburg

Businessman

Garfield

Rock

Almayvonne

Charlotte

Dick Butler

Ted Forrest

Matt Doherty

Kid

Evan Lionel Smith

Detective Mills

James Deuter

Mr Shift

Rondi Reed

District Attorney

Gordon McClure

Reverend Pimp Daddy

Richard Hamilton

Judge Harold Lake

Ken Earl

Bailiff

John Allen

David Razowsky

Jewelry Store Clerks

Salli Richardson

Pretty Customer

Pete Zahradnick

Officer Deeb

Lorenzo Clemons

Officer Royce

Bill Harris

Joel

Greg Belmont

Waiter

Will Zahn

Bum/Cop

Ike Eichling

Taxi Driver

Renee A. Lacour

Rock's Mother

Robert Swan

Detective Lawrence

Victor Cole

Sergeant Tan

Eddie "Bo" Smith

Large Man

Ted Topolski

Inmate

A. C. Tony Smith

Guy on Toilet

Michael Bacarella

Habib

Jo Be Cerny

Patrolman

Allison Gordy

Prostitute

Jackie Hoffman

Jill

Mollie Grabermann

Receptionist

Bernie Mac

Club Doorman

Mik Scriba

Transit Cop

William King

Correction Officer

Irma P. Hall

Lady on Phone

James Spinks

Tracy Stewart

Kahil El Zabar

Congo Player

Ben Lin

Chinese Cook

Sean A. Tate

Kid

Pat "Soul" Scaggs

Token Booth Clerk

Lauro Lopez

Dentist

Jimmy Woodard

Man on Street

</



Star construct: Damon Wayans

his apparently infinite resources and persuades him to get out of whatever scam he is caught up in. Seymour is arrested trying to use a fake credit card, and agrees to wear a wire in order to trap Keith. But the operation goes wrong, resulting in a shoot-out in the club office. Keith takes Seymour hostage and Johnny gives pursuit. Keith and Johnny fight it out to the death, and Johnny emerges the victor.

While it fits easily enough into the popular line of crossover comedy-thrillers, from *48 HRS.* to *Lethal Weapon 3*, *Mo' Money* is less a genre construct than a hip star vehicle, designed by writer-executive producer Damon Wayans as a showcase for actor-comedian Damon Wayans. Indeed, there is no discernible irony in the film's up-front title, and the project's unapologetically commercial instincts are carried over into the script to such an extent that any moral stance is highly selective at best. For all the crimes committed by Johnny and his brother Seymour, the only objection seems to be that they might get caught (in fact they are, but it doesn't much matter, they are a law unto themselves).

On the other hand, when Amber expresses concern, Johnny is adamant that he's not dealing drugs, and of course he's not behind any brutal murders ("The difference between you and me", Keith informs Johnny, "is that you fight fair"). It's a generous verdict on a thief, a fraud and a con-man, but the film has at least drawn a relevant contrast between the up-town white collar world of the Dynasty Club and the black downtown ghettos Johnny comes from. When he applies for a job, Johnny gives a phone box as his own number, and guards it jealously for the next three days.

The narrative is no more than perfunctory (and the cop, Walsh, has to deliver a hackneyed 'he was my partner and he saved my life' speech), but the film makes the most of its action set-pieces (director Peter Macdonald comes from *Rambo III* and second unit work), Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis music, and abundant comic routines. The real distinction between Johnny and Keith – and between Johnny and Amber's non-criminal boyfriend Tom – is that Johnny fights *funny*. He lives on his wits and his charm, and Wayans has enough of both to temper misgivings about the project as a whole, and the portrayal of women in particular.

Tom Charity

Peter's Friends

United Kingdom 1992

Director: Kenneth Branagh

Certificate
15

Distributor
Entertainment
Production Companies
Renaissance Films/
Samuel Goldwyn
Company

In association with
Channel Four Films
Executive Producer
Stephen Evans

Producer
Kenneth Branagh
Co-producer
Martin Bergman

Line Producer
David Parfitt
Production Supervisor
Mark Cooper

Production Co-ordinator
Iona Price
Location Manager
Paul Shersby

Assistant Directors
Chris Newman
Keith Young
Carl Oprey

Screenplay
Martin Bergman
Rita Rudner
Director of Photography
Roger Lanser

Colour
Technicolor
Steadicam Operator
Andy Shuttleworth

Editor
Andrew Marcus
Associate Editor
Kerry Kohler

Production Designer
Tim Harvey
Art Director
Martin Childs

Music Director
Garin Greenaway
Songs

"Orpheus in the
Underground" by
John Hudson, Jacques
Offenbach, performed
by Kenneth Branagh,

Alphonsia Emmanuel,
Stephen Fry, Hugh
Laurie, Imelda
Staunton, Emma
Thompson, Gavin
Greenaway; "Everybody
Wants to Rule the
World" by Roland
Orzabal, Ian Stanley,

Chris Hughes,
performed by Tears
for Fears; "My Baby
Just Cares For Me"
by Gus Kahn, Walter
Donaldson, performed
by Nina Simone;

"You're My Best Friend"
by John Deacon,
performed by Queen;
"Girls Just Want to
Have Fun" by Richard
Hazard, performed
by Cyndi Lauper;

"Hungry Heart" by
and performed by
Bruce Springsteen;
"Don't Get Me Wrong"
by Chrissie Hynde,

performed by The
Pretenders; "What's
Love Got to Do with
It" by Graham Lyle,
Terry Britten,

performed by Tina
Turner; "Give Me
Strength" by and
performed by Eric
Clapton; "Let's Stay
Together" by Al
Jackson Jr., Al Green,

Willie Mitchell,
performed by The
Pasadenas; "Rio"
by and performed
by Michael Nesmith;

9,098 feet
101 minutes

"As the Days Go By" by
I. Thomas, performed
by Daryl Braithwaite

Choreography
David Toguri
Costume Design
Susan Coates
Stephanie Collie

Wardrobe
Nancy Thompson
Make-up Supervisor
Peter Frampton

Montage Opening
Sequence Title Design
Graham Kern
Titles/Opticals
Peerless Camera
Company

Sound Editors
Mark Auguste
Martin Evans
Sound Recordist
David Crozier
Dolby stereo

Sound Re-recordists
Robin O'Donoghue
Dominic Lester
Consultants
Production:
Hugh Crutwell
Music:
Clive Farrel
Production Assistant
Randal McDonnell

Cast
Hugh Laurie
Roger
Imelda Staunton
Mary
Stephen Fry
Peter
Emma Thompson
Maggie
Kenneth Branagh
Andrew
Alphonsia Emmanuel
Sarah
Rita Rudner
Carol
Phyllida Law
Vera
Alex Lowe
Paul
Tony Slattery
Brian
Richard Briers
Peter's Father
Alex Scott
Young Paul
Edward Jewesbury
Solicitor
Hetta Charnley
Woman at Airport
Ann Davies
Brenda
Magdalena Buznea
Old Lady
Chris Pikes
Chauffeur
Nicki Wright
Brian's Wife
Bill Parfitt
Ruby May Musto
Ben

9,098 feet
101 minutes

After a final, ill-received performance of the "Farewell '82 Review", the six members of a university cabaret troupe (Peter, Roger, Mary, Maggie, Sarah and Andrew) have gone their separate ways. Ten years later, they gather for a New Year's Eve reunion at the palatial country house which Peter recently inherited from his father along with the grimly devoted cook/housekeeper Vera. Except for Andrew, who arrives with his glamorous television-star wife Carol in their own car, the friends are collected from Old Marsden Station by Vera's handsome son Paul. Maggie is still single, Roger and Mary have married each other, and Sarah is accompanied by her latest admirer, Brian.

As they settle in, the effects of the intervening decade begin to become apparent. Roger and Mary, a successful writing team in television advertising, are on edge about the son they have left at home with a babysitter; Mary phones obsessively to check on him. Maggie, with no regular companion other than her cat, is desperate for romantic commitment and has set her sights on Peter. Sarah, with an insatiable appetite for sex, is reducing Brian, who has decided to leave his wife and family for her, to a state of exhaustion. Andrew, whose once-bright Hollywood prospects have been eclipsed partly by alcoholism and partly by his wife's meteoric rise to fame in *Who's in the Kitchen?*, the sit-com he writes for her, is bitter at the loss of his ideals. And Peter, their host, has frittered away his youth and talents in a comfortable indolence.

Neither Carol nor Brian, the 'outsiders' of the group, make a favourable impression on the rest: Carol tries to bribe Vera to prepare vegetarian meals, and is upset by Sarah's past association with Andrew, while Brian clumsily draws attention to the fact that Roger and Mary have already lost one child. Peter reminds his friends of a cabaret they once performed in Bradford, and they join together in a song, but by the

end of the evening the party mood has soured. In the night, Maggie offers herself to Peter, but he retreats in panic; she seeks consolation in the kitchen where Carol, now gorging herself, gives sympathetic advice. After a bitter row, Roger and Mary recognise their dependence on each other and become passionately reconciled, remaining in bed for much of the next day.

During the morning, Andrew and Peter wonder about reviving the play they once began writing together but later abandoned. There is a phone call from Hollywood for Carol: she has the chance of a major film role and must leave immediately, much to Andrew's disgust. He stays, but rejects overtures from Sarah who, tiring of Brian, is considering her next conquest. She finds young Paul interesting, but Maggie unexpectedly forestalls her. Brian's wife reclaims him in their car, and by the evening only Peter and his five friends remain. In the countdown to the New Year, Andrew gets increasingly drunk and abusive, but when Peter announces that he has been diagnosed as HIV-positive, all antagonisms are forgotten and, recapturing the mood of their last farewell performance, the friends pledge perpetual loyalty.

With its introductory glimpse of Peter and company during their final public appearance, their audience slumped in wholly appropriate boredom and disgust, Kenneth Branagh's venture into *Big Chill* territory (after his revisions of Olivier and Hitchcock) cruelly deprives its characters of any claim to triumph they might reasonably treasure for the rest of their lives. Instead, after congratulating themselves on having avoided lynching, they scatter their separate ways until reassembled to celebrate, at a safe distance, the anniversary of the disaster. What they discover, of course, is that nothing much has improved in the interval; on the contrary, the event itself, however awful, represented a collusion of innocence and engage-

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Life was a cabaret: Alphonsia Emmanuel, Tony Slattery

ment they have long since lost.

Although disillusionment is the theme that Branagh has extracted and amplified from *The Big Chill* – slightly at odds with Kasdan who, as confirmed in *Grand Canyon*, insists on a soft-centred optimism despite all contradictory evidence – *Peter's Friends* is disconcertingly faithful to its role model, almost as if inspired by paraphrase. Here again is the television star inviting mingled awe and exasperation, the single girl on the hunt for a sexual partner, the addict consumed by self-loathing, the amiable commentator nobody can stand. Here again are the rowdy round-table conversations, the heart-searchings in the kitchen, the marriages under strain, the miming celebration of favourite pop records, and the outbursts of communal singing. What has been damagingly overlooked, however, is any sense of a genuine ten-year background for these disparate lives.

Where Kasdan's crowd at least shared some modest politics and a history of ball games, Branagh's admit neither to a common culture nor even to a common society. Obsessed with their sexual odysseys, they wail over what they haven't done rather than referring to contacts and achievements that would, along with shared reminiscences, be the inevitable topics for this kind of reunion. What it all lacks, too, is the sense of discovery, not only because the Peter people, as scripted, have little to offer beyond occasional carefully delivered one-liners ("Adults are just children who earn money", "If there is a God, He takes extremely long lunches", and so on), but also because Branagh's cast are familiar and forthright where Kasdan's gathering was remarkably new and subtle.

In *Peter's Friends*, the Wooster-and-Jeeves team of Fry and Laurie give excellent performances but seem constantly on the verge of a punchline that will pulverise all semblance of straight drama, while Tony Slattery unashamedly makes a cabaret of all his scenes. The result is very much like the opening charade – an affair of bright eyes, flashing teeth, wilful charm, and total self-congratulation. Playing against it, perhaps to draw the fire, Branagh bravely casts himself as the most repellent member of the team, isolated, scathing, desperate at having accomplished so little.

Not surprisingly, this does nothing to convince us either of his thwarted genius or that his colleagues have any good reason for putting up with him. And Branagh the director, while well-served by his customary designer Tim Harvey, can do little to rescue the situation, other than by attractive location shots, an occasional prow around the Christmas tree, and lengthy takes that leave the cast to carry the story. With its thumping soundtrack, from which only Michael Nesmith's promise of a happier elsewhere emerges with distinction, *Peter's Friends* is in altogether too many ways a comedy of failures.

Philip Strick

Raising Cain

USA 1992

Director: Brian De Palma

Certificates

15

Distributor

UIP

Production Company

Universal Pictures

Producer

Gale Ann Hurd

Co-producer

Michael R. Joyce

Production Co-ordinator

Kris Fullan

Unit Production Manager

John S. Engel

Location Manager

Bruce Devan

Post-production Supervisor

John S. Engel

Castings

Pam Dixon

Extras:

Annette Pirrone

Assistant Directors

James Dyer

Annie Spiegelman

Gwyneth Horder-Payton

Screenplay

Brian De Palma

Director of Photography

Stephen H. Burum

In colour

Camera Operator

Dustin Blauvelt

Steadicam Operator

James Muro

Larry McConkey

Video 24-Frame Playback

Intervideo/TTI

Optical Effects

Pacific Title

Additional:

4-Ward Productions

Editors

Paul Hirsch

Bonnie Koehler

Robert Dalva

Production Designer

Doug Kraner

Art Director

Mark Billerman

Set Design

Don Weinger

Set Decorator

Barbara Munch

Head Scenic Artist

Elizabeth Hamilton

Special Effects

Robbie Knott

Co-ordinator

Tom Knott

Special Effects

Animatronic Puppet Effects

Todd Masters Company

Thom Floutz

Karin Hanson

Gilbert Limberdo

Music

Pino Donaggio

Music Extracts

"Morning" from "Peer

Gynt" by Edvard Grieg

Music Performed by

Unione Musicista

Orchestrations

Pino Donaggio

Natale Massara

Costume Design

Bobbie Read

Wardrobe

Supervisor:

Judy Feil

Set:

Michael J. Becker

Make-up Artists

Supervisor:

Manlio Rocchetti

Additional:

Mindy Hall

Title Design

Ernest Farino

Titles

Pacific Title

Supervising Sound Editors

Jerry Ross

John Morris

Sound Editors

Dialogue:

Bob Newlan

Hugo Weng

ADR Supervisor

Susan Dudeck

ADR Editor

Jonathan Klein

Foley Editors

Mark Pappas

Steve Richardson

Sound Recordists

Nelson Stoll

Matt Patterson

ADR: Charleen Richards

Allan Bond

Foley:

Greg Orloff

James Ashwill

Nerves Gezalyan

Music:

Sergio Marcotulli

Dolby stereo

Consultant:

Steve F. B. Smith

Sound Re-recordists

Kevin O'Connell

Rick Kline

Loop Group

Richard Brestoff

Thomas Brunelle

James F. Dean

Leigh French

Bridget Sienna

Ruth Silveira

Arnold F. Turner

Elisa Pensler

Sound Effects Editors

Rodger Pardee

John Thomas

Foley Artists

Dan O'Connell

Alicia Stevenson

Production Assistants

Post-production:

Michael D. Kerwin

Key set:

Cindy Ichikawa

Set: Matthew Ferguson

Ron Cacas

Michael D. Kerwin

Debbi Esteves

Anton Goldman

Geoff Davis

Fight Choreographer

Kay Kinler

Stunt Co-ordinator

Gary Hymes

Stunts

Glory Fioramonti

Myke Schwartz

Spiro Razatos

Fred Waugh

Cast

John Lithgow

Carter/Cain/

Dr Nix/Josh/Margo

Lolita Davidovich

Jenny

Steven Bauer

Jack

Frances Sternhagen

Dr Waldheim

Gregg Henry

Lieutenant Terri

Tom Bower

Sergeant Cally

Mel Harris

Sarah

Teri Austin

Karen

Gabrielle Carteris

Nan

Barton Heyman

Mack

Amanda Pombo

Amy

Kathleen Callan

Emma

Ed Hooks

Coroner

Jim Johnson

Night Clerk

Karen Kahn

Saleslady

Noe Montoya

Riq Boogie Espinoza

Gardeners

Carolyn Morrell

Newsreader

W. Allen Taylor

Peters

Scott Townley

Little Boy (Josh)

Mary Uhlend

Receptionist

Steve Schill

Weatherman

James Van Harper

Young Detective

8,277 feet

92 minutes

Dr Carter Nix, a child psychologist supervising the upbringing of his daughter Amy, tells his neighbour Karen that his father, a Norwegian child development specialist, is running a research project, and asks if her son can take part. When Karen refuses, he chloroforms her, and his twin brother Cain – his imaginary alter ego – intervenes to supervise her murder; Carter/Cain takes the child to a motel where his father is apparently hiding. Carter's wife Jenny, a doctor, is disconcerted by the attention he is paying Amy. Out shopping, she meets Jack Dante, with whom she had an affair when his dying wife had been one of her patients; he forgets his keys, and Jenny decides to return them and to buy him a clock for Valentine's Day, which she leaves in his hotel room.

Meeting Jack again, she makes love with him in the woods, then wakes to realise she has been dreaming, and that she has mixed up Jack's and Carter's Valentine presents. She goes to Jack's hotel to exchange the clocks, and ends up staying the night; she remembers that during their lovemaking in the woods, she had spotted a figure, apparently Carter, watching them. Jenny rushes home but is killed when she crashes into the spear on a statue. She wakes to find it was a nightmare, but Carter smothers her with a pillow. He had followed her and Jack into the woods, and Cain had intervened, stealing Jack's car keys; Cain had flirted with Nan, a babysitter, and stolen her charge before killing her and concealing her body in Jack's car.

Carter puts Jenny in his car and pushes it into the lake, then announces her disappearance to the police and helps to make up an identikit of a murder suspect, identifying Jack as the killer. But Mac, a retired cop, recalls hearing the name Nix in a child kidnap case, and unearths Dr Waldheim, a psychologist who had collaborated with Dr Nix Sr. on *Raising Cain*, a book about multiple personality. Dr Waldheim explains that Nix had traumatised children to create multiple personalities; Cain is the result of an experiment on his own son.

The body of a woman is found in a car in the lake, but Jenny has escaped

and is still alive. She is reunited with Jack – now cleared of suspicion – and Waldheim undertakes to hypnotise Carter to find out from his other personas where the children are that he has abducted. Carter becomes first the child Josh, then a woman called Margo, but knocks Waldheim out and escapes disguised as her. Unwittingly, Jenny follows him to the motel, where she encounters Dr Nix, who is still alive and holding Amy; Carter stabs his father, and the falling Amy is saved by Jack, while Carter escapes. Back in the park, Jenny tells her friend Sara that Dr Nix had faked suicide in order to continue his experiments; but Amy runs off into the woods, and Jenny follows her only to be confronted by Carter, now in the guise of Margo.

For the last few years, Brian De Palma has effectively been sabotaging his own assimilation into the mainstream. His recent films seemed leagues away, in style and subject matter, from his familiar territory, but he was spiking them with glaring De Palma moments, feats of visual or narrative bravado that made the films collapse into a black hole of pure autonomous signature. Hence the *Odessa Steps* parody in *The Untouchables* and the mystifying ending of *Casualties of War* which threw away the preceding narrative in what amounted to an 'it-was-all-a-dream' twist.

These flauntings of signature jeopardised the narrative or stylistic coherence of each film. *Raising Cain*, however, jettisons coherence from the start; it is an extended hysterical assertion of De Palma trademarks, not merely a return to his paranoid proto-Hitchcock vein, but thoroughgoing self-parody. The allusions to his own films are legion, among them the virtuosic tracking shot, the shock ending of *Carrie*, the transvestism of *Dressed to Kill*, not to mention the familiar invocations of *Vertigo* and *Psycho*: the self-reflexivity is now so dense that allusion to Hitchcock primarily signifies allusion to De Palma. *Raising Cain* also acknowledges a debt to *Peeping Tom* in its premise of the bad father: in which case De Palma might be casting himself as the film-making son so trauma-



All in the name: John Lithgow

tised by a father-figure (Hitchcock) that he is compelled forever to act out the family resemblance.

Paradoxically, *Raising Cain* is so excessively manipulative that it fails to carry any real manipulative power. Instead of cajoling us into suspense, the film hectors us with its demands that we collude in its play; the film itself acts at once like the neurotic attention-demanding child and like the tyrannical parent. A film about identity, about the problem of finding a stable self behind a series of interchangeable masks, it is beset by the very same confusion. It is a 'bad father' film, a doppelgänger film, a Jekyll and Hyde film – all concepts that overlap, but are rarely elided as confusingly as they are here.

The possibilities of the multiple-identity theme are limited precisely because De Palma allows the premise no bounds. The twist is that old Dr Nix is real, while we have assumed all along that he is as imaginary as Cain – Lithgow plays the old man in a wild Norwegian accent that we assume is Carter's version of the ventriloquist squawk with which Norman Bates animates his mother. *Raising Cain* is scandalously prodigal with its loose ends and red herrings, and scandalously unfair with its narrative let-outs. It repeatedly sets up twists, discredits them by having a character wake from a dream, and then discredits the awakening by staging another one on top of it. But you can only slip so far into the dream-narrative vortex before it all ceases to matter.

This absence of narrative value stems from a tendency to regard all things as interchangeable pieces in the game. Much hinges on a number of Renaults, Carter's and Jack's, being perfectly identical; and the same goes for women – the grimacing corpse on a mortuary slab appears to be Jenny but turns out to be Karen. The notion that all female corpses are alike may be classic De Palma misogyny, but it also points to the emptiness of a conception in which all murders are simply a variation on the basic schema killer-corpse-car, itself extrapolated from *Psycho*, whose car-in-lake motif is done to death.

The most depressing thing about the film is this sense that all things are equal – people, clocks, the children who are peremptorily whisked off only to resurface as a sort of reserve McGuffin. A De Palma apologist might argue that the fascination lies precisely in this, in the film's rather desperate admission that when all things are equal, all you can do is use identity as a narrative core around which to build an admission of identity loss. But with the suspense genre already so thoroughly disqualified by the mainstream thriller, such a credo of exhaustion hardly seems an adequate response. Devotees of self-reflexivity at all costs might argue that it is the only valid response, but it is hard to see *Raising Cain* as anything but a sterile, tail-chasing admission of defeat.

Jonathan Romney

Simple Men

United Kingdom/USA 1992

Director: Hal Hartley

Certificate

15

Distributor

Metro

Production Companies

Zenith (London)/
American Playhouse
Theatrical (New York)
In association with

Fine Line Features/Film

Four International/
BIM Distribuzione

With financial

assistance from

The Public

Broadcasting Service/
The Corporation for

Public Broadcasting/
The National

Endowment for the

Arts/Chubb Group of

Insurance Companies

Executive Producers

Jerome Brownstein

Bruce Weiss

Producers

Ted Hope

Hal Hartley

Production Co-ordinator

Beth A. Boyd

Production Manager

Cecilia Kate Roque

Location Manager

Ann F. Markel

Casting

Liz Kiegley

Extras:

Sari Kiegley

Assistant Directors

Greg Jacobs

Allen Kupetsky

Screenplay

Hal Hartley

Director of Photography

Michael Spiller

Colour

Technicolor

Editor

Steve Hamilton

Production Designer

Daniel Ouellette

Art Director

Thérèse DePrez

Set Decorator

Jeff Hartmann

Set Dressers

Bart Brown

Jeff Allen

Scenic Artist

Mark Browne Quick

Special Effects

M. E. Scott Prescott

Music

Ned Rife

Music Producer

Jeffrey Taylor

Songs

"Kool Thing" by

and performed by

Sonic Youth; "Always

Something" by Georgia

Hubley, Ira Kaplan,

"Some Kinda Fatigue"

by Ira Kaplan,

"Sleeping Pill"

by Georgia Hubley,

Ira Kaplan, James

McNew, performed

by Yo La Tengo

Costume Design

Alexandra Welker

Wardrobe Supervisor

Marina Marit

Make-up Artists

Judy Chin

Additional:

Liz Nardone

Titles

Jeff Kaplan, Inc

Opticals

R/Greenberg

Sound Recordist

Jeff Pullman

Sound Re-recordist

Reilly Steele

Production Assistants

Jim Hensz

Michelle Romaine

J. P. Hamilton

Don No

Kim Horridge

Lisa Brownstein

Maura Corridon

Cast

Robert Burke

Bill McCabe

William Sage

Dennis McCabe

Karen Sillas

Kate

Elina Löwensohn

Elina

Martin Donovan

Martin

Mark Chandler Bailey

Mike

Chris Cooke

Vic

Jeffrey Howard

Ned Rife

Holly Marie Combs

Kim

Joe Stevens

Jack

Damian Young

Sheriff

Marietta Marich

Mom (Meg)

John Alexander MacKay

Dad

Bethany Wright

Mary

Richard Reyes

Security Guard

James Hansen Prince

Frank

Ed Geldart

Cop at Desk

Vivian Lanko

Nun

Alissa Alban

Waitress

Margaret A. Bowman

Nurse Louise

Jo Perkins

Nurse Otto

Mary McKenzie

Vera

Matt Malloy

Boyish Cop

9,440 feet

105 minutes



Home truths: Chris Cooke, William Sage, Mark Bailey

New York. Bill McCabe, a white-collar worker who specialises in computer fraud, has organised a daring heist with his girlfriend Vera and another accomplice. But Vera double-crosses him, leaving Bill with just \$3,000 of the \$650,000 proceeds. Meanwhile, Bill's younger brother Dennis, a scholarship student, is looking for their father, a former baseball star turned political radical, who has been on the run ever since he was accused, in 1968, of planting a bomb outside the Pentagon which killed several innocent bystanders. The news that their father has just been captured is followed by reports that he has escaped from hospital and vanished again.

The boys visit their mother, and Bill gives her what he has left from the robbery while Dennis turns over his scholarship money. She offers Dennis a clue to their father's whereabouts, giving him a name, Tara, and a Long Island telephone number. The brothers venture as far into Long Island as their remaining \$15 will take them, Bill cynically declaring that he is less interested in finding their father (whose political activities he scorns) than in seducing and abandoning the next beautiful woman he meets, in revenge for Vera's betrayal. Bill swaps his gun for a motorbike which he repairs, and the boys take off when the police arrive in pursuit of Bill for the robbery.

Travelling through the countryside, they encounter Kate, who runs Homer's Oyster Bar, and her companion Elina, a beautiful Romanian woman who suffers from epileptic fits. Kate invites the brothers to stay, ostensibly because she is grateful for their help with Elina, but also because she is scared that her psychotic husband Jack, who has threatened to kill her, has recently been released from prison. Bill, falling under Kate's spell, is all for abandoning the quest for their father, and Dennis reluctantly agrees to stay at the inn a little longer while they try to sell their motorbike. Dennis becomes convinced that Elina is

involved with their father, and becomes vaguely jealous as he too has designs on Elina.

He follows her down to the pier, where he sees her meet his father who has been hiding away on a fishing boat (called "Tara"). Dennis confronts the old man, demanding to know whether he was responsible for the bomb; he denies the charge. Reading from Malatesta's *Anarchy*, he delivers an anarchist sermon to the enraptured Elina and the bemused Dennis. Bill, who has meanwhile confronted Jack at the inn, and found him to be lost and harmless, has fallen in love with Kate and wants to stay with her. But as the police close in, he borrows Kate's car to drive to the pier and escape with his father, while Dennis buys him some time by getting arrested in his stead by the incompetent local cops. But unable to leave, Bill returns to the inn, embraces Kate, and gives himself up to the police.

In Hal Hartley's *Simple Men*, the heroes, as the title would suggest, are straightforward, deadpan figures who adhere to commonsense philosophies and who believe that life can be boiled down to one or two home truths. There is nothing oblique in their universe. Their raw, credulous optimism is matched by the structure of the film, which opens like a slightly sardonic comic strip, in mid-robbery, and soon establishes a quest for these latterday searchers to embark upon. One brother, the idealistic young Dennis, resolves to find and confront his anarchist, outlaw father, as if a simple meeting with dad will resolve all life's mysteries and provide him with the key of how to continue.

Bill, the older, more cynical brother, double-crossed in love and 'business', has evolved his own simplistic variation on the Machiavellian credo that everybody, from the government down to the lowliest individual, is a crook, and that the only real distinction is between the 'heroes', who get away scot-free, and the 'villains', who are ►

◀ caught. The boys' father, a baseball star-turned-terrorist, is a neat amalgam of both sons' visions. Hartley uses the old Lawrentian cliché of women as the site of mystery to deflect the boys' quest, and their overly straightforward notions of how things are or how they should be. When they arrive at Kate's inn, what started as a road movie turns inwards, as the brothers strive to come to terms with emotions which their superficial theories of life cannot account for.

Early in the film, Bill McCabe states his credo: "There's no such thing as adventure and romance. There's only trouble and desire. But the funny thing is, when you desire something you immediately get into trouble. And when you get into trouble, you don't desire anything at all". Such homespun philosophy comes easily to Hartley's heroes. Disaffected suburban cowboys, who might have stumbled out of a Sam Shepard play or taken leave from a Raymond Carver story, they lurch around laconically, making gnomish remarks which seek to explain the universe in a nutshell. Of course, contrary to McCabe's assertion, there is romance and adventure aplenty to be found in trouble and desire, and it is this Hartley seeks to harness in *Simple Men*.

Although the result is disappointing by comparison with its sparkling predecessors, *The Unbelievable Truth* and *Trust*, it has much to recommend it, including Robert Burke and William Sage as the temperamentally incompatible brothers, and Karen Sillas (the feisty nurse in *Trust*) as Kate. Michael Spiller's crisp photography and Hartley's painterly eye for composition give many scenes a striking tableau effect.

The stock comic characters are as funny as ever – the lovelorn policeman whose own domestic entanglements keep getting in the way of his investigations, the gum-chewing teenage vamp (rekindling memories of Adrienne Shelley, so effective in Hartley's earlier films), and a chain-smoking nun last seen tussling on the ground with a cop. After a while, though, the director's determination to make his characters say something witty or profound whenever they draw breath becomes wearing.

In the director's previous work, his 'outsiders' were attached to a community. They may have behaved bizarrely but, by comparison with the everyday psychosis of their neighbours, they were positive bastions of sanity and commonsense. Here, however, the main characters are on their own, stuck in a country inn for the better part of the time. As they discuss love, sex, Madonna and politics, they begin to sound more and more like self-righteous undergraduates, and the film risks losing its comic touch altogether. Hartley has described the benefits of working with the same cast and crew over an extended period. The drawback of so intimate a relationship is that *Simple Men*, in its best moments, seems like a carbon copy of its predecessors.

Geoffrey Macnab

Sister Act

USA 1992

Director: Emile Ardolino

Certificate PG
Distributor Buena Vista
Production Company Touchstone Pictures
In association with Touchwood Pacific Partners
Executive Producer Scott Rudin
Producer Teri Schwartz
Co-producer Mario Iscovich
Associate Producer Cindy Gilmore
Production Co-ordinator Jill Simpson
Production Manager John J. Smith
Location Manager George Herthel
Casting Judy Taylor
Lynda Gordon
Johnson-Liff & Zerman
Location:
Marshall Peck
ADR Voice:
Barbara Harris
Assistant Directors
Joe Camp III
Ian Foster Woolf
Parnes Cartwright
Seth Cirkner
Screenplay
Joseph Howard
Director of Photography
Adam Greenberg
Colour
Technicolor
Camera Operators
Michael A. Benson
Edward Gold
Steadicam Operator
Elizabeth Ziegler
Opticals
Buena Vista Optical
and Perpetual Motion
Pictures
Editors
Richard Halsey
Film:
Colleen Halsey
Production Designer
Jackson DeGovia
Set Design
Robert M. Beall
Ann Harris
Set Decorator
Thomas L. Roysden
Production Illustrators
George Denes Suhayda
Nikita Knatz
Special Effects
Rocky Gehr
Music
Marc Shaiman
**Sister Mary Robert's
Vocals Performed by**
Andrea Robinson
Orchestrations
Marc Shaiman
Jimmy Vivino
Mark McKenzie
Tom Malone
Hummie Mann
Music Producers
Marc Shaiman
Jimmy Vivino
Joel Moss
Supervising Music Editor
Curtis Roush
Music Editor
Joel Moss
Music Co-ordinator
Jimmy Vivino
Songs
"(Love is Like a)
Heat Wave" by Brian
Holland, Lamont
Dozier, Edward
Holland; "My Guy" by
William Robinson Jnr;
"I Will Follow Him"
("Chariot") by Norman
Gimbel, Arthur

Altman, Jacques Plante,
J.W. Stole, Del Roma;
"Rescue Me" by Carl
Smith, Raynard Miner,
performed by Fontella
Bass; "Roll with Me
Henry" by Etta James,
Hank Ballard, Johnny
Otis, performed by Etta
James; "Gravy" by Kal
Mann, Dave Appell,
performed by Dee Dee
Sharp; "Just a Touch of
Love (Everyday)" by
Robert Clivilles,
performed by C&C
Music Factory;
"Shout" by Ronald
Isley, Rudolph Isley,
O'Kelly Isley; "Bar Nun"
by Jimmy Vivino;
"Homealone" by
Tom Malone; "If My
Sister's in Trouble" by
David Barratt, William
Clift, performed by
Lady Soul
Choreography
Lester Wilson
Additional:
Lisa Mordente
Costume Design
Molly Maginnis
Costume Supervisor
Elena Del Rio
Costumers
Mary Elizabeth Still
Gala Autumn
Make-up Artist
Michael Germain
Title Design
Greenberg & Schuler
Supervising Sound Editor
Bill Phillips
Sound Editors
Jim Yant
Jeremy Gordon
Jimmy Ling
John J. Carr
Thomas Burke
Sound Recordists
Darin Knight
Music:
Joel Moss
Joseph McGee
Fred Vogler
Foley Recordists
Bruce Bell
David Gertz
Dolby stereo
Sound Re-recordists
Terry Porter
Mel Metcalfe
David J. Hudson
Denis Blackerby
Foley FX
Jeff Wilhoit
Catherine Harper
Technical Advisers
Sister Ada Geraghty
Rev. Martin Greenlaw
Consultants
Music: Dan Carlin Jnr
Vocal: Seth Riggs
Production Assistants
John J. Smith Jnr
Lee J. Bognar
Kelly Ching
Peter Pav
Brian Jochum
Hyatt Bass
Alonzo E. Greer
Elisabeth Brown
Sarah Connolly
Stunt Co-ordinator
Alan Oliney
Stunts
Kym Washington
Sandi Gross
Gary Price
Steven Chambers
Justin De Rosa
Cast
Whoopi Goldberg
Deloris Van Cartier
Maggie Smith
Mother Superior

Kathy Najimy
Sister Mary Patrick
Wendy Makkena
Sister Mary Robert
Mary Wickes
Sister Mary Lazarus
Harvey Keitel
Vince LaRocca
Bill Nunn
Eddie Souther
Robert Miranda
Joey
Richard Portnow
Willy
Ellen Albertini Dow
Carmen Zapata
Pat Crawford Brown
Prudence Wright Holmes
Georgia Creighton
Susan Johnson
Ruth Kobart
Susan Browning
Darlene Koldenhoven
Sheri Izzard
Edith Diaz
Beth Fowler
Choir Nuns
Rose Parenti
Sister Alma
Joseph Maher
Bishop O'Hara
Jim Beaver
Clarkson
Jennifer Lewis
Michelle
Charlotte Crossley
Tina
A.J. Johnson
Lewanda

Desreta Jackson
Zatella Beatty
Skye Bassett
Teenage Girls
Lois De Banzie
Immaculata
Isis Carmen Jones
Little Deloris
Max Grodenchik
Ernie
Joseph G. Medals
Henry Parker
Michael Durrell
Larry Merrick
Robert Jimenez
News Reporter
Toni Kalem
Connie LaRocca
Kevin Bourland
Pilot
David Boyce
Croupier
Timothy J. Pedegana
Gambler
Terry Willis
Salesman
David M. Parker
Bartender
Nicky Katt
Waiter
Mike Jolly
Jeremy Roberts
Bikers
Eugene Greytak
The Pope
Al Finney
Dog

9,003 feet
100 minutes

● Reno. Lounge singer Deloris Van Cartier barges into a hotel room to return a blue mink given her by Vince LaRocca, her married gangster boyfriend, and witnesses the murder of an informant. Vince orders his hoods Joey and Willy to eliminate Deloris, but she escapes and promises cop Eddie Souther that she will testify against Vince if she can be protected from him. Eddie delivers Deloris to a convent in a run-down area of San Francisco, making a donation to the Mother Superior to convince her to shelter the witness.

Deloris, a lapsed Catholic, finds it hard to adjust to the nun's life but when she joins the convent's remarkably bad choir she is elected choir-mistress Lazarus and manages not only to get the choir in tune but, thanks to some soul-style gimmickry, to turn them into enough of a draw to lure people back into the church.

The Mother Superior has insisted on keeping the order apart from the dangerous neighbourhood, but under Deloris' influence, the nuns become active in the community. The choir becomes so famous that the Pope,



On a prayer and a song: Whoopi Goldberg

due to visit the city, requests a command performance.

Days before her scheduled court appearance, Deloris is kidnapped by Joey and Willy – who have been tipped off by a leak in the police department – and taken to Reno for execution. The hoods find themselves unable to kill a nun in cold blood, and the Mother Superior rallies the order to go to Reno and save Deloris. After a chase through the casino, Deloris is rescued and Vince arrested. Deloris and the choir perform for the Pope, and go on to great show-business success.

● A sleeper in the US, *Sister Act* is a typical Touchstone comedy vehicle, with a highly derivative premise (just different enough from *Nuns on the Run* not to be counted as a remake) and a sure-fire central situation, suitable for spinning off into a one-season sitcom. It could as easily have been tailored for Bette Midler, Shelley Long or Martin Short as it is here for Whoopi Goldberg. That it works is down to Goldberg's sassiness, reined in somewhat for a family audience (she tells the departing Vince that she has only two words for him and, after a caution from a nearby nun, amends them to "bless you"), and the infallibly crowd-pleasing musical sequences in which Motown standards ("My Guy", "I Will Follow Him") are performed with religious overtones by Deloris' choir.

Maggie Smith's Mother Superior is the most interesting character, occasionally chiding Deloris for misleading the other nuns about the essential benevolence of the street-world she has barricaded the convent against, and obviously fearing that she is living in a more dangerous movie (*The Bad Lieutenant*, perhaps, or *Viridiana*). But the nuns eventually mingle joyously with the bikers and teens of the neighbourhood, prompting one thug, in the film's funniest line, to comment, "If this turns into a nuns' bar, I'm out of here". Like Deloris' choir, the film drains any depth of religious feeling out of the nuns' calling and repackages it in non-threateningly cute show-biz terms, yielding a film that is never tasteless or offensive but also misses out on its chances to be, in Woody Allen's phrase about his original script for *What's New, Pussycat?*, "twice as funny and half as successful".

Given that the hoods are always fumblingly comic, and the initial murder is completely elided from the film, there is never any real suspense, and the film bumbles along in its mildly comic way with occasional reminders that there's a thriller plot in the background. This winds up with a lazy chase through Reno that substitutes clutter for action and nuns for humour. The under-the-credits montage of magazine covers, which suggests a major musical career for the choir, evokes the international success of Soeur Sourire, who made a worldwide hit of "Dominique" in the early 60s but whose career came to a less than happy end.

Kim Newman

Slacker

USA 1991

Director: Richard Linklater

Certificate
(Not yet issued)
Distributor
Feature Film Company
Production Company
Detour Film
Productions
Producer
Richard Linklater
Production Manager/Casting
Anne Walker McBay
Screenplay
Richard Linklater
Director of Photography
Lee Daniel
In colour
Steadicam Operator
Ralph Watson
Editor
Scott Rhodes
Art Director
Debbie Pastor
Music
Buffalo Gals
Triangle Mallet Apron
The Texas Instruments
Wardrobe
Meg Brennan
Sound Editor
Denise Montgomery
Production Assistants
Kerthy Hearn
Clay Daniel
Gina Garza
Michael Rigby
Laura Tabor
Luke Savisky

Cast
Richard Linklater
Should Have Stayed
at the Bus Station
Rudy Basquez
Taxidriver
Jean Caffaine
Roadkill
Jan Hockey
Jogger
Stephen Hockey
Running Late
Mark James
Hit-and-run Son
Samuel Dietert
Grocery Grabber
of Death's Bounty
Bob Boyd
Officer Bozzio
Terrence Kirk
Officer Love
Keith McCormack
Street Musician
Jennifer Schaudies
Walking to Coffee Shop
Dan Kratochvil
Expresso Czar/
Masonic Malcontent
Maris Strautmanis
Giant Cappucino
Brecht Andersch
Dostoevsky Wannabe
Tom Pallotta
Looking for Missing
Friend
Jerry Deloney
Been on the Moon
Since the 50s
Heather West
Tura Satana Look-alike

John Spath
Co-op Guy
Ron Marks
Bush Basher
Daniel Dugan
Comb Game Player
Brian Crockett
Sadistic Comb Game
Player
Scott Marcus
Ultimate Loser
Stella Weir
Stephanie from Dallas
Teresa Taylor
Pap Smear Pusher
Mark Harris
T-shirt Terrorist
Greg Wilson
Anti-traveller
Debbie Pastor
Wants to Leave
the Country
Gina Lalli
Sidewalk Psychic
Sharon Roos
Devoted Follower
Frank Orrall
Happy-go-lucky Guy
Skip Fulton Jr
Time for One Special
Abra Moore
Has Change
Lori Capp
Traumatized
Yacht Owner
Gus Vayas
Cranky Cook
Louis Black
Paranoid Paper Reader
Don Stroud
Recluse in Bathrobe
Janelle Cooloch
Shut-in Girlfriend
Aleister Barron
Peeping Kid
Albans Benchoff
Coke Machine Robber
Nigel Benchoff
Budding Capitalist
Youth
Zara Barron
Coke Heist Accomplice
Kevin Whitley
Jilted Boyfriend
Steve Anderson
Guy Who Tosses
Typewriter
Robert Pierson
Based on
Authoritative Sources
Sarah Harmon
Has Faith in Groups
David Haymond
Street Dweller
John Slate
"Conspiracy
A-go-go" Author
Scott Van Horn
Nova
Lee Daniels
GTO
Charles Gunning
Hitch-hiker Awaiting
True Call
Tamsy Ringler
Video Interviewer
Luke Savisky
Video Cameraman
Meg Brennan
Sitting at Café

Phillip Hostak
Hit up for Cigarettes
D. Angus MacDonald
Video Playing Store
Shelly Kristaponis
Shoplifter
Louis Mackey
Old Anarchist
Kathy McCarthy
Anarchist's Daughter
Michael Laird
Burglar
Jack Meredith
Get-away Accomplice
Clark Lee Walker
Cadillac Crook
Kalman Spellicch
Video Backpacker
Sigouri Wilkovich
Slapping Boyfriend
John Hawkins
Choking Girlfriend
Scott Rhodes
Disgruntled Grad
Student
D. Montgomery
Having a
Breakthrough Day
Mimi Vitetta
Teacup Sculptor
Susannah Simone
Working on the Same
Painting
Bruce Hughes
Cland Plecther Waiter
Keith Fletcher
Eric Buehlman
Café Card Players
R. Malice
Scooby Doo
Philosopher
Mark Oulick
Papa Smurf
Kim Krizan
Questions Happiness
Annick Souhami
Has Conquered Fear
of Rejection
Regina Garza
Smoking Writer

Stephen Jacobson
ST-EVE with a Van
Eric Lord
Doorman at Club
Kelly Linn
Bike Rider
with Nice Shoes
Racheal Reinhardt
Cousin from Greece
Stewart Bennet
Sitting on Ledge
Kevin Thompson
Handstamping
Arm Licker
Nick Maffei
Pixi-visionary
Nolan Morrison
To Be Buried by History
Kyle Rosenblad
Going to Catch a Show
Ed Hall
Band Playing at Club
Lucinda Scott
Dairy Queen
Photographer
Wammo
Anti-artist
Marianne Hyatt
Late Night Pickup
Gary Price
Watching Early
Morning TV
Joseph Jones
Old Man Recording
Thoughts
Kendall Smith
Post-modern Paul
Revere
Sean Coffey
Super 8 Cameraman
Jennifer Carroll
All-night Partyer
Charlotte Norris
Convertible Driver
Patrice Sullivan
Day Tripper
Greg Ward
Tosses Camera off Cliff
8,730 feet
97 minutes

● A young man arrives by long-distance bus in Austin, Texas. Hailing a cab, he tells the driver his theory of alternative realities. After leaving the cab, he crosses a road where, a moment later, a middle-aged woman is knocked down and killed by a hit-and-run driver. The driver, her son, goes home and is subsequently arrested. Two neighbours comment on his arrest before going their separate ways. One of them, who carries a guitar, encounters a young blonde woman...

Continuing this relay-team pattern, the film follows a succession of the inhabitants of Austin (many, though not all of them, young), moving from one to the next as their paths intersect. They include a man with a conspiracy theory about people being abducted by NASA; a woman who wants to sell what she claims is Madonna's pap smear; a bunch of children into voyeurism and stealing Diet Coke from machines; a would-be writer obsessed with Kennedy assassination theories; a man returning from the funeral of his hated stepfather; a young man who tries to hold up a bookshop, but is gently disarmed by the elderly, anarchist owner; a woman making an outdoor model of her menstrual cycle; and a hippy who believes the Smurfs are a form of religious indoctrination.

Finally, a man broadcasting a litany of violence from a loudspeaker van is filmed by a laughing group of young people in a convertible. This gang, all equipped with cameras and busily filming each other, drive out into the country and climb to the summit of a

rock high above a river. One of them hurls his camera down into the river. The film's viewpoint spirals down with it and the film blacks out.

● With *Slacker*, Richard Linklater crosses *The Phantom of Liberty* with David Byrne's *True Stories* – but comes up with something less detached, and even more inconsequential, than either. And where Byrne's narrator remained the quizzical outsider, inviting our superior amusement at his small-town freakshow, Linklater signals identification with his compulsive verbalisers by becoming one of them, playing the taxi-fare hung up on alternative realities who initiates the narrative chain reaction. Not only that, but Linklater's character, with his belief that "every thought you have creates its own reality", sets the tone of the film, since more than one of his fellow citizens is evidently far gone into a parallel universe.

Slacker shares its constituency of fringe dwellers with Douglas Coupland's recent novel *Generation X*: young no-hopers doing nothing much, or at most 'McJobs' – short-term, dead-end, mindless labour. But while Coupland, for all his modishly lax narrative, sticks largely to a recurrent group of characters, Linklater never follows the same person twice. Like a dog distracted by a new and more promising scent, he meanders from one digression to the next, always interested but without urgency. Vignettes may last a few seconds, or five minutes. Now and then we get short snatches of almost-plot – the hit-and-run matricide, the old anarchist fantasising about Orwell – at other times a brief gag line. As a woman is pulled in for shop-lifting, an older couple walk past; "She's in 'my ethics class', one observes.

Slackers, for Linklater, are people who "spend their whole lives in their own heads" – where they evidently generate no shortage of paranoid conspiracy theories. (Though maybe no more so than in America as a whole.) So we get the JFK-assassination freak, the guy who believes "the Masons control history", another who ties together NASA, the CIA, the greenhouse effect and an undisclosed Mars landing in 1962 – and, most engaging of all, the pot-head who claims the Smurfs are designed to "get kids used to seeing blue people" in preparation for the coming of Krishna.

What is absent from *Slacker* is any significant political dimension. Though one irascible man snarls, "I may live badly – but at least I don't have to work to do it", there's little sense of serious deprivation, nor any suggestion that these marginal characters are the victims of callous economic policy. Which isn't necessarily a fault. Linklater has chosen to present his "slackers" (most of whom seem to be busily, if not gainfully, employed) on their own terms, neither pitying nor patronising them. The result is a film of quirky, unpredictable and oddly poetic charm.

Philip Kemp



One and only

Sneakers

USA 1992

Director: Phil Alden Robinson

Certificate

12

Distributor

UIP

Production Company

Universal Pictures

Executive Producer

Lindsay Parsons Jnr

Producers

Walter F. Parkes

Lawrence Lasker

Associate Producer

William M. Elvin

Production Co-ordinator

Lisa J. Watters

Production Manager

Lindsay Parsons Jnr

Location Manager

Robin A. Citrin

2nd Unit Director

Glenn H. Randall Jnr

Casting

Risa Braham Garcia

Juel Bestrop

Associate:

Mary Vernieu

Extras:

Central Casting

Steve Spiker

Additional San

Francisco:

Davia Nelson

Assistant Directors

William M. Elvin

Alan Edmisten

Nandi Bowe

Screenplay

Phil Alden Robinson

Lawrence Lasker

Walter F. Parkes

Director of Photography

John Lindley

Colour

DeLuxe

Camera Operator

Lawrence Karman

Steadicam Operator

Jim Muro

Video Playback

Harry Lessing

Computer Effects

Supervisor

Steve Grumette

Computer Effects

Will Fowler

Bennie R. Brothers

Computer Graphics Artists

Brett Bently

Doug Wolfigram

Editor

Tom Rolf

Production Designer

Patrizia von

Brandenstein

Art Director

Dianne Wagner

Set Design

James J. Murakami

Keith B. Burns

James Tocci

Set Decorator

Samara Schaffer

Production Illustrator

Thomas W. Lay Jnr

Mentor Huebner

Special Effects

Co-ordinator

Kenneth Pepiot

Special Effects

Foreman:

Albert Delgado

Peter H. Albiez

Larz Anderson

Music

James Horner

Music Extracts

"Waltz in E Minor"

by Frederic Chopin,

performed by Jun Asai;

"Violin Concerto in E"

BMV 1042, by Johann

Sebastian Bach;

"Flamenco Sketches"

by and performed by

Miles Davis; "String

Quartet 1 in E Minor

"From My Life" by

Bedrich Smetana,

performed by

Jacqueline Brand,

Julie Gigante, Victoria

Miskolczy, David Speltz

Music Performed by

Bransford Marsalis

Mike Fisher

Ralph Grierson

James Horner

Joel Peskin

Ian Underwood

Orchestrations

Brad Dechter

Frank Bennett

Supervising Music Editor

Jim Henrikson

Songs

"Really" by Mike

Bloomfield, Al Kooper,

performed by Mike

Bloomfield, Al Kooper,

Steven Stills; "Chain

of Fools" by Don Covay,

performed by Aretha

Franklin; "Rainy Day

Women No.12 & 35" by

and performed by Bob

Dylan; "Bad, Bad Leroy

Brown" by Jim Croce,

performed by George

Kee Cheung; "The Girl

From Ipanema" by

Antonio Carlos Jobim,

Vinicius DeMoraes,

performed by Charlie

Byrd; "Corcovado"

by Antonio Carlos

Jobim, performed by

Charlie Byrd

Costume Design

Bernie Pollack

Costume Supervisor

Hugo Pena

Wardrobe

Women:

Marie A. Kaderbeck

Men:

Gregory B. Pena

Make-up Artists

Key:

Gary Liddiard

Fred Blau

Titles/Opticals

Pacific Title

Titles

Judith Kahn Inc/

Moving Impressions

Supervising Sound Editor

Milton C. Burrow

Sound Editors

Neil Burrow

Scott Burrow

Gordon Davidson

Chester L. Slomka

Supervising ADR Editor

Uncle J. Kamen

ADR Editor

Shelley Rae Hinton

Keley Editor

David L. Horton Jnr

Sound Recordists

Willie D. Burton

ADR:

Doc Kane

Foley:

Sean McCormack

Karin Roulo

Music:

Shawn Murphy

Dolby stereo

Sound Re-recordists

Donald O. Mitchell

Michael Herbrick

Frank Montano

Additional Sound Effects

Stephen Dewey

Foley Artists

Jerry Trent

Audrey Trent

Consultants

Security:

John Strauchs

Mathematical:

Professor Leonard

Adelman

Sleight of Hand:

Ricky Jay

Production Assistants

Andrew Francis Fenady

Shawn Hanley

Stunt Co-ordinator

Glenn H. Randall Jnr

Stunts

Michael Adams

Eddie Braun

Keith Campbell

Carl Ciarfalo

Gloria Fioramonti

Orwin C. Harvey

Robert Herron

Larry Holt

Terrance James

Melvin Jones

Julius LeFlore

Bill McIntosh

Denney Pierce

Bernie Pock

Spiro Razatos

Rick Seaman

Jeff Smolek

William Washington

Webster Whinery

Cast

Robert Redford

Martin Bishop

Dan Aykroyd

"Mother"

Ben Kingsley

Cosmo

Mary McDonnell

River Phoenix

Carl

Sidney Poitier

Crease

David Strathairn

Whistler

Timothy Busfield

Dick Gordon

George Hearn

Gregor

Stephen Tobolowsky

Dr Werner Brandes

Gary Hershberger

College-Aged Bishop

Jojo Marr

College-Aged Cosmo

Bohdil Elfman

Centurion S&L Night

Guard

Denise Dowse

Bank Teller

Hanyee

Bank Secretary

Eddie Jones

Buddy Wallace

Time Winters

Homeless Man

Jun Asai

Piano Prodigy

Donal Logue

Dr Gunter Janek

Lee Carlington

Dr Elena Rhyzkov

John Shepard

Coolidge Institute

Guard

Ellaraino

Mrs Crease

Shayna Hollinquist

Dayna Hollinquist

Melissa Crease

Jacqueline Brand

Julie Gigante

Victoria Miskolczy

David Speltz

Kiev String Quartet

Leslie Hardy

Gregor's Date

John Moio

Gregor's Chauffeur

James Craven

RC Everbeck

FBI Agents

Ernie Tetrault

TV Anchorman

Lori Hall

NSA Phone Operator

George Kee Cheung

Chinese Restaurant

Singer

Hayward Soo Hoo

Chinese Restaurant

Waiter

Michael Kinney

Rudy Francis Nemetz

Al Foster

Playtronics Desk

Guards

Ralph Monaco

Paul Jenkins

Playtronics Lobby

Guards

George Hartman

Tetsuo II: Bodyhammer

Japan 1991

Director: Shinya Tsukamoto

Certificate

(Not yet issued)

Distributor

ICA

Production Companies

Kaiju Theatre

Production

For Toshiba EMI

Executive Producers

Hiroshi Koizumi

Shinya Tsukamoto

Producers

Fuminori Shishido

Fumio Kurokawa

Screenplay

Shinya Tsukamoto

Directors of Photography

Shinya Tsukamoto

Fumikazu Oda

Katsunori Yokoyama

In colour

Editor

Shinya Tsukamoto

Art Director

Shinya Tsukamoto

Special Effects

Takashi Oda

Kan Takahama

Akira Fukaya

Music

Chu Ishikawa

Song

"Materials" by

Tomoyasu Hotei

Special Make-up Effects

Takashi Oda

Kan Takahama

Akira Fukaya

Cast

Tomoroh Taguchi

Taniguchi Tomoo

Nobu Kanaoka

Kana

Shinya Tsukamoto

Yatsu

Keinosuke Tomioka

Minori

Sujin Kim

Taniguchi's Father

Min Tanaka

Taniguchi's Mother

Hideaki Tezuka

Big Skinhead

Tomoo Asada

Young Skinhead

Toraemon Utazawa

Mad Scientist

7,470 feet

83 minutes

Subtitles

sprouts tentacles from his head with which he absorbs all Yatsu's followers. Taniguchi and Yatsu engage in a duel, and Taniguchi, who has become a human tank, defeats his brother. With Kana riding on his caterpillar tread, Taniguchi trundles into the streets of the devastated city.

In this sequel-cum-remake, Shinya Tsukamoto apparently ups the stakes on his *Tetsuo* by adding colour, increasing its running time and underpinning the primal imagery and spectacular mutations of the first film with an 'origin' sequence that explains, if not rationally, where the mutants came from. However, the alterations are very much cosmetic, serving - like the iron shell Taniguchi grows - mainly to make the project sturdier rather than to alter or even extend its subject matter. Despite the colour, Tsukamoto deliberately limits

the palette to oily blacks, battleship greys and the occasional blotches of blue, green and dark red, lending if not a monochrome effect then that of a minimally tinted comic-strip.

Given the film's fondness for taking leftovers and twisting them into new organisms, it is entirely apt that Tsukamoto has borrowed heavily in order to prop up his images, lifting from David Cronenberg's *Scanners* the skeleton plot of a sibling conflict between the mutating rival sons of a mad visionary scientist. This time, Tsukamoto blunts the brutal sexuality that was part of the original protagonist's mutations, displacing it on to Taniguchi and Yatsu's father who is seen in flashback murdering his wife while making love. Instead he presents Tomoroh Taguchi, the star of the earlier movie, in a reincarnated but altered version of his old role.

Taniguchi comes to control his new

body more completely than the unnamed 'salary man' of *Tetsuo*, deftly using the cluster of guns that burst from his chest rather than being carried away, as his predecessor was, by the uncontrollable urges of his drill-bit penis. The emotional palette is extended slightly to include Taniguchi's grief at the slaughter of Minori, and Kana's steadfast love for her cyborg husband, but again these are minor tweaks on the machine.

With its humorous and repulsive special effects, accompanied by an appropriately grinding soundtrack, the film piles more and more debris on Taniguchi, finally signalling his continued individuality by leaving his eyes alive in the dead mass of metal meat, as in *The Quatermass Xperiment*. Also, in a wittily grotesque touch, he is allowed to retain his blindingly white and bizarrely expressive human teeth.

Kim Newman

Tokyo, Taniguchi Tomoo, a respectable office worker, lives happily with his wife Kana and their son Minori, but he is tormented by the lack of any memories from the first eight years of his life. Two black leather-clad skinheads have been dogging Taniguchi's tracks and, in a department store, snatch Minori, incidentally shooting Taniguchi in the chest with a rivet gun. Taniguchi and Kana pursue the kidnappers but only catch up after Minori has been killed, whereupon Taniguchi sprouts weapons from his chest and destroys the skinheads.

Taniguchi is himself abducted by a mad scientist and kept under observation as he mutates further. Kana discovers that the rivet which apparently triggered her husband's mutation never actually entered his body and that something else has caused his transformation. Yatsu, commander of the skinheads faction, rebels against the mad scientist and kills him, but continues to stimulate his followers' mutations, paying especial attention to Taniguchi's development. Taniguchi finally remembers his childhood: he and Yatsu are brothers, raised by a father who instilled the seeds of mutation in them to make them better adapted to the decaying world. He murdered their mother.

Taniguchi becomes less and less human, sprouting a metal skin and multiple weapons from his body as he grows more powerful. Yatsu kidnaps Kana to force Taniguchi into a final confrontation, whereupon Taniguchi



Ringin' cosmetic changes

This Is My Life

USA 1992

Director: Nora Ephron

Certificate

12

Distributor

20th Century Fox

Production Company

20th Century Fox

Executive Producers

Patricia K. Meyer

Carole Isenberg

Producer

Lynda Obst

Co-producer

Michael R. Joyce

Line Producer

Gayle Newborn

Production Co-ordinator

Toni Blay

Reggie Robb

LA:

Allison Heath

NY:

Olga Georgevich

Production Manager

Barbara Kelly

Unit Production Manager

Scott Thaler

Location Managers

Gordon Yang

Vince Nyuli

NY:

Donna Bloom

Post-production Supervisor

JoAnn M. Laub

Casting

Juliet Taylor

Additional NY:

Wendy Ettinger

Additional Canada:

Deirdre Bowen

Extras Canada:

Film Extra Services

Assistant Directors

Henry Bronchtein

Karen Lee Hall

Rose Tedesco

Ron Oxley

LA:

Deborah Kent

NY:

Maggie Murphy

Screenplay

Nora Ephron

Delia Ephron

Based on the novel

This Is Your Life by

Meg Wolitzer

Director of Photography

Bobby Byrne

Colour

DeLuxe

Camera

Operator/Steadicam

Operator

David Crone

Opticals

Pacific Title

Editor

Robert Reitano

Production Designer

David Chapman

Art Directors

Barbra Matis

LA:

Jon Spiron

NY:

Tom McDermott

Set Decorators

Hilton Rosemarin

Jaro Dick

Leadman:

Don McQueen

On-set:

Bill Wood

Scenic Artist

Matthew Lammerick

Sketch Artist

Brick Mason

Special Effects

Co-ordinator

Bob Hall

Music

Carly Simon

Music Director

Teese Gohl

Music Extract

"Also Sprach

Zarathustra"

by Richard Strauss

Music Arrangements

Teese Gohl

Music Producer

Frank Filippetti

Supervising Music

Editor/Music Co-ordinator

Nicholas Meyers

Songs

"Love of My Life", "Back

the Way", "The Show

Must Go On" by and

performed by Carly

Simon; "You Don't

Have to Be an Angel

(The Night Before

Christmas)" by Carly

Simon; "Johnny's

Theme" by Paul Anka,

Johnny Carson; "You

Can't Get to Heaven"

by Nora Ephron, Delia

Ephron; "The Chicken

Song" by Delia Ephron,

Jonathan Scheffer;

"Deck the Hall with

Jingle Bells" by Walter

Kahn, Craig Sharmat,

performed by

LA Raiders

Choreography

Pat Birch

Costume Design

Jeffrey Kurland

Costume Supervisor

Margaret Mohr

Wardrobe

Linda Petty

Make-up Artist

Linda Gill

Title Design

Walter Bernard

Milton Glaser

Titles

The Effects House

Supervising Sound Editor

Stan Bochner

Sound Editors

Stuart Emanuel

Tony Martine

Lou Corbino

ADR Editor

Harriet Fidlow Winn

Sound Recordists

Doug Ganton

Kerry Kelley

Harry Higgins

LA:

Pete San Filippo

NY:

Bernie Zuch

ADR Recordists

Reilly Steele

Peter Waggoner

Foley Recordist

George Lara

Dolby stereo

Sound Re-recordist

Lee Dichter

Sound Effects Editor

Richard P. Cirincione

Vocal Sound Effects

Sondra James

Foley Artists

Elisha Birnbaum

Brian Vancho

Consultants

Comedy:

Bob Nelson

Stand-up Comedy:

Meg Wolitzer

Joy Behar

Jet Production Assistant

Geoffrey Smither

Cast

Julie Kavner

Dottie Ingels

Samantha Mathis

Erica Ingels

Gaby Hoffmann

Opal Ingels

Carrie Fisher

Claudia Curtis

Dan Aykroyd

Arnold Moss

Bob Nelson

Ed

Marita Geraghty

Mia Jablon

Welker White

Lynn

Caroline Aaron

Martha Ingels

Kathy Ann Najimy

Angela

Danny Zorn

Jordan

Renee Lippin

Arlene

Joy Behar

Ruby

Estelle Harris

Aunt Harriet

Sidney Armus

Morris Chesler

David Eisner

Oliver

Annie Golden

Marianne

Tim Blake Nelson

Dennis

Harvey Miller

Lester

Patrick Rose

Gary Garry

Kate McGregor-Stewart

Jordan's Mother

Ellen Cleghorne

TV Talk Show Host

Valerie Bromfield

Dawna

Diane Sokolow

Charlene

Tom Wood

Billy

Louis DiBianco

Norm Ingels

Barbara Stewart

Joanne

Sylvia Kauders

Evelyn

Faye Cohen

Evelyn's Daughter

Theresa Tova

Rochelle

Marcia DeBonis

Linda

Heather Brown

Jessica

Billy Van

Agent

Bob Zidel

Mr Kaminski

Joel Y. Zion

Rabbi

John E. Johnson

Martin

Joseph Mastrodominico

Moving Man

Max Bernstein

Oly Obst

Jacob Bernstein

Tree Boys

Zoe Hayes

Girl in Mouse Costume

Renessa Blitz

Lisa

Lisa Boynton

Shawn

Audrey Webb

Mrs Fabricant

Katherine Greenwood

Young Matron

Eric R. Mendelsohn

Ice Cream Parlour

Waiter

Bo Dietl

Detective Wheedle

8,416 feet

94 minutes



The mouth and the material: Julie Kavner

Dottie is mortified when she discovers that they have gone. The girls find their father living in the suburbs and remarried; their encounter is awkward and cold, and his new wife is nicer to them than he is. Realising that he has no place in their lives, they return home. Dottie meets them at the station, having been tipped off by Norm's wife. She tells her daughters that they must accept her new life, her career and even the Moss, and that she in turn will give them more time and understanding.

"If you give kids a choice - your mother in the next room on the verge of suicide versus your mother in ecstasy in Hawaii, they'll choose suicide in the next room, believe me". So goes one of Dottie's pointed little lines in her stand-up routine. It cuts to the heart of the matter in *This Is My Life*, screenwriter Nora Ephron's modest but smart directorial debut, adapted from a novel by the young New York writer Meg Wolitzer and dealing candidly with the troubles and conflicts in an all-female household as mother goes away on business.

The opening voice-over volleys between Dottie and daughter Erica, suggesting that this could be a coming-of-age movie about a gauche and morose teenager with a nerdy boyfriend and an unhealthy preoccupation with her pimples, or a menopausal movie about a woman who wants to make something of her life and get out of exfoliating wax and placenta creams.

The truth is that it's both, and more. The concerns are familiar but then Dottie and her daughters' dilemma is not one that is going to be resolved easily, as the film's rather loose ending emphasises.

Typically, for the woman who was

willing to admit to *Heartburn*, Ephron also betrays an element of autobiographical anxiety here. *This Is My Life* (the original Wolitzer title was *This Is Your Life*) becomes her family affair, the story of two sisters living in the wake of their celebrity mother which Ephron has scripted with her own sister, Delia.

Certainly there are parallels: Erica is most upset when she discovers that her mother is recycling her and her sister's life lessons into jokes for her act. "Everything is material" retorts Dottie; "Everything is copy" is the similarly terse line that Ephron most often quotes from her own mother, the screenwriter Phoebe Ephron.

These brooding thoughts of a Hollywood daughter are displaced on to a vaudevillian world. The comic-circuit background is neatly sketched in, from Dottie's fellow comedians at the Catch a Falling Star Club (including a man who composes rhyming couplets about fish), to the obligatory references to Johnny Carson and the rest of the media shebang, and the price that has to be paid for success (Dottie does an advertisement for chemical-free poultry that has her bouncing and clucking around in a giant yellow suit).

Julie Kavner gives the polka dot-obsessed Dottie a wonderfully eccentric edge, and her timing is pristine, both on and off-stage, with spiel of the "I wouldn't say the audience was dead, but they were wearing toe tags" variety.

But

The Waterdance

USA 1991

Directors: Neal Jimenez, Michael Steinberg

Certificate
15

Distributor
Samuel Goldwyn

Production Company
No Frills Production

Executive Producer
Guy Riedel

Producers
Gale Anne Hurd
Marie Cantin

Production Executive
Leslie Lytel

Production Co-ordinator
Beth DePatie

Production Manager
Laura M. Greenlee

Location Manager
Bill Doyle

Post-production Supervisor
Lisa Yesko

Post-production Co-ordinator
Jennifer Carroll

2nd Unit Director
Robert Ziembicki

Casting
Pam Dixon

Extras:
Terrence Harris

Assistant Directors
Josh King
Marcel A. Brubaker
Trey Batchelor

Screenplay
Neal Jimenez

Director of Photography
Mark Plummer

In colour

Additional Camera Operator
Paul Hughen

Video
Todd Darling

Playback Operator:
Wesley Groves

Editor
Jeff Freeman

Production Designer
Robert Ziembicki

Art Director
Ted Berner

Set Decorator
Julie M. Anderson

Set Dresser
Cathy Mantych

Scenic Artist
Walter Lab

Storyboard Artist
Peter Von Sholly

Music
Michael Convertino

Music Supervisor
Sharon Boyle

Music Editor
Dina Tuchner

Music Co-ordinators
Barklie Griggs
Jennifer Richardson
Dana Sano

Choreography
Judith Flex

Costume Design
Isis Mussenden

Wardrobe Supervisor
Alexandria Forster

Costumer
Teresa Binder

Make-up Supervisor
Kelcey Fry

Supervising Sound Editors
Robert Mackston
Alan Howarth
Brian Risner
Lance Brown

ADR Editor
Charleen Richards

Foley Editor
Greg Orloff

Sound Recordists
Steve Nelson
Patricio Libenson

Music:
Paul Brown

ADR Recordist
Randy Piotroski

Foley Recordist
Randy Singer

ADR Voices
Loop Therapy

Sound Re-recordists
Matthew Iadarola
Stanley Kastner

Foley Artists
Dan O'Connell
Alicia Stevenson

Technical Advisers
Jeff Cressy
Bill Saar

Medical Advisers
Doris Flair-Henry
Mary Elders
Robert Foster

Production Assistants
Key Set:
Joshua Satlof

Office:
Athena Alexander
David Sherman

Stunt Co-ordinator
John Branagan

Stunts
Rick Avery
Jeff Imada
Al Jones
Erik Stabenau

Stand-ins
Maggie Anders
Ross Hammer
Oliver Patterson
David Phillips

Cast
Eric Stoltz
Joel Garcia
Wesley Snipes
Raymond Hill
William Forsythe
Bloss
Helen Hunt
Anna
Elizabeth Peña
Rosa
William Allen Young
Les
Henry Harris
Mr Gibson
Tony Genaro
Victor
Eva Rodriguez
Victor's Wife
Erick Vigil
Edgar Rodriguez
Victor's Sons
Angelica Castell
Victor's Daughter
Grace Zabriskie
Pat
Kimberly Scott
Alice
Casey Stengel
Vernon
Susan Gibney
Cheryl Lynn
Elizabeth Dennehy
Candy

Starletta Dupois
Florence
Mirron E. Willis
Doctor
Badja Djola
Decton
Marco Ramos
Tomas
David Aguilar
Carlos
Thomas F. Duffy
Harrison
Joey Ciccone
Biker
Chelsea Madison-Ciu
Lucille
Fay Hauser
Rachel Hill
Andrea Young
Starletta Hill
Tai Thai
Sang
Rick Lieberman
David Albini
Ed Barkas
Western Man
James Roach
Man in Electronic
Wheelchair
Lyla Chang
Sandra Lee
Kyu Na
Sanghyuk Shin
Korean Singers
Joe Goddard
Derelict Man
Pola Churchill
Vernon's Wife
Barbara Alyn Woods
Annabelle Lee
Joe Nipote
Emcee
Jennifer Ryan
Adrianna Barbor
Strippers
Tony Simotes
Phone Operator
Rebecca Ruth
Sheila
William Forward
Cop
Lara Cody
Ann Blessing
Thomas White
Reni Satoni
Kathleen McCarty
Andy Goldberg
Dean Wein
Jeffrey Scott Yesko
Wailla Group

9,592 feet
107 minutes



The men: Eric Stoltz...

Joel Garcia, a young novelist, breaks his neck in a hiking accident and is diagnosed as paraplegic. He is brought to a rehabilitation centre where he gradually adjusts to his disability, in the company of Bloss, a racist biker buoyed up by fantasies of suing the rich motorist who collided with him, and Raymond Hill, a black man, who compensates for the alienation of his wife and daughter by spinning yarns about his life and loves.

Before his accident, Joel had become involved with Anna, a married woman who works at his publisher's. She visits him constantly, although she remains undecided about leaving her husband for him. Enmities develop between Bloss, Joel and Ray, but eventually their shared plight creates a sense of community. Bloss accepts that he was drunk at the time of his accident and probably responsible for his injury, and makes a bet with Ray about the veracity of a sexual anecdote he has told about a nude dancer named Annabelle Lee.

Joel and Anna re-establish their sexual relationship, albeit within the confines of his disability, but their long-term future remains undecided, with Joel occasionally lashing out at his girlfriend in an attempt to force her to leave him. Ray is released but his wife, who had grown tired of his fantasising long before his accident, refuses to take him back. He starts drinking heavily and moves into an old people's home.

Bloss and Joel, along with a Korean cripple Bloss has befriended, sneak out of the centre one night to visit a strip club. They are unable to persuade a desolate Ray to join them, even though they meet the fabled Annabelle who seems to confirm Ray's stories about her. Although he drunkenly telephones Bloss one night claiming he is about to kill himself, Ray gradually comes to accept his position. Anna leaves her husband and helps Joel leave the centre.

Based on the personal experiences of screenwriter (River's Edge, For the Boys) Neal Jimenez, who makes his debut as co-director here, *The Waterdance* - one of that breed of film which refuses to explain its title - is squarely in the tradition of *The Men* and *Coming Home*. The wartime experiences which created a communality for the paraplegic veterans of those films, and thus gave their crippling a political-social dimension is, however, entirely absent from the disparate collection of violent and unlucky patients assembled here. Most predictable is the course of reconciliation, with each of the characters coming to terms with their disabilities as they find common ground between them.

This is bluntly signalled by the way the racist Bloss, first seen trying to forge an alliance with Joel over the question of whether to watch Spanish television in the ward, is coldly reminded that the protagonist's surname is Hispanic. He then enters into a rough friendship with the black Ray,



...Helen Hunt

finding with the deadbeat a class identity at odds with that of the privileged Joel and, more touchingly, becomes protective of a Korean boy injured by a hold-up man who presumably comes from the violent world of the biker himself.

The film does, however, try to cut against the grain, by making the colourful Ray - who would by virtue of his streetwise cool be the heroic inspiration of a typical 'liberal' movie - the most deeply divided and unredeemed of the characters. Joel, who tries at first to pretend that nothing has happened - claiming that he doesn't need his legs to write - only comes to appreciate the seriousness of his position as the film progresses and he is forced to question his relationship with Anna. With an honesty that comes perhaps from personal experience, the film addresses, unlike the tactful *The Men* or the fantasising *Coming Home*, the question of how exactly the paraplegic can maintain a sexual relationship (the lack of chairbound female characters, understandable in the veteran films but odd here, leaves disabled female sexuality still a taboo subject).

The film has two extraordinarily honest and moving sex scenes, a comic turn behind curtains on the ward, which pays off when a nurse (Elizabeth Peña) calmly tells Anna that publicly bestowing sexual privilege on Joel upsets the other patients, who already tend to be suspicious of his status, and that there are 'insurance considerations' too horrifying to deal with. More affecting is a motel session broken off when, after shyly and coyly undressing in the dark for foreplay, Anna turns on the lights and both partners are forced to ignore their mutual nudity, physical and emotional, as she deals with the momentary crisis of his ruptured catheter.

The final moment, with a completely paralysed patient glimpsed early on reappearing in his all-electric wheelchair to observe Joel (and, perhaps, Anna) leaving the centre for good and then coolly returning to the ward he will never escape, effectively undercuts any 'special pleading' on Jimenez's part. Excellently acted by an ensemble cast, with especially fine work from the underused Helen Hunt (of *Trancers*) as Anna, and an interesting cameo from *Twin Peaks*' Grace Zabriskie as Bloss' tolerant blue-collar mother, this is a commendable project, never tainted by worthiness or undue selfpity.

Kim Newman

Zamri, Umri, Voskresni! (Don't Move, Die and Rise Again!)

USSR 1989

Director: Vitaly Kanevsky

Certificate 12	Cast Dinara Drukarova
Distributor Artificial Eye	Galiia
Production Company Lenfilm Studio	Pavel Nazarov
A Trinity Bridge	Valerka
Group production	Elena Popova
With the	Nina
participation of	Valery Ivchenko
The First Film	Vyacheslav Bambushek
Creative Studio	Vadim Ermolaev
Production Manager Valentina Tarasova	V. Kosobutskaya
Assistant Directors V. Krasil'nikova	N. Mikhnev
M. Minko	E. Lipets
Screenplay Vitaly Kanevsky	A. Rybakov
Director of Photography Vladimir Bryliakov	Iu Rotin
Special Effects Photography	Ryuichi Simidzu
Iu Zaitsev	Katia Gromova
Camera Operator N. Lazutkin	F. Turkin
Editor G. Kornilova	V. Khlusevich
Production Designer Yury Pashigorev	O. Korytin
Art Director Iu Rotin	A. Drukarov
Music Sergei Banevich	D. Platonov
Costumes T. Kochergina	A. Pashkevich
T. Mileant	I. Sheikin
Make-up G. Vdovichenko	R. Rakht
Sound Oksana Strugina	A. Khalilulin
Production Assistants V. Inikhov	M. Bitiukova
T. Loginova	M. Ledeneva
I. Gaevskaia	Katia Kanevskaya
A. Pilipko	L. Kaplunova
	S. Krasovsky
	V. Panova
	A. Osipov
	O. Morozkina
	T. Biserova
	V. Ivanov
	A. Romanov
	9,252 feet
	103 minutes
	Subtitles



Out of an icy limbo (Dinara Drukarova, Pavel Nazarov)...

In 1947, twelve-year-old Valerka lives with his mother, Nina, in the remote Far Eastern Soviet minzing town of Soutchan north of Vladivostok. Striving to make the best of this pitiless environment with its forced-labour camps for Japanese POWs and criminals of all description, Nina works as a prostitute while Valerka, when not attending the local school, sells tea in the market place. He competes fiercely with another tea seller, Galiia, a girl who tolerantly helps and befriends him. With his savings, he buys a pair of skates, and when these are immediately stolen Valerka suspects his schoolmates; his response is to put yeast in the school latrines.

Galiia traces the missing skates to the home of Genka, a boy whose father works on the railway, and helps Valerka to steal them back. Ungratefully continuing to hassle her in the market place, Valerka jumps on a passing freight wagon when Galiia drives him away, but is promptly hauled off the train by Genka's father and beaten up. Galiia is sympathetic, but when Valerka goes home Nina is too busy with her clients to be bothered with him. Jealous of his mother's many

'boyfriends', Valerka often quarrels with Nina, but also helps to protect her from Vic, a persistent admirer.

Galiia becomes an inseparable companion, and together they observe the many aspects of Soutchan life: the cripples and mental-cases in the streets, the agitated Japanese prisoners, the struggle for heavily rationed supplies, the dance festival that turns into a riot, the young teenager desperate to get pregnant so that she can escape a labour camp. Suddenly taking her parental duties seriously, Nina drags Valerka to the school's headmaster to be punished for the yeast episode: when the headmaster says the misdemeanour was too serious to be forgiven, she beats the boy herself. Determined to take out his revenge on Genka's father, Valerka tampers with the train tracks and derails the freight engine. An official investigator is soon on his trail; when Galiia provides an alibi, she comes under suspicion as well.

Convinced that an arrest would mean his execution, Valerka hides aboard another train and makes his way to his grandmother's home in a town beside the Sea of Japan. Escaping

the clutches of the local police, he stumbles on the hideout of a gang of crooks, headed by Taras and Bled, who recruit him to assist in a robbery: he is small enough to squeeze through a barred window and open the door of a jewellery store from the inside. Caught by the owner, Valerka sees the man shot by the gang. Later, Galiia turns up unexpectedly, hoping to persuade him to go back to Soutchan. Vowing to relinquish his life of crime, Valerka

joins her on the long trek home; fearing betrayal, the gang follows and makes a brutal attack to ensure their silence. Valerka is hospitalised, while Galiia's corpse is returned on a hand-cart to her mother, who goes out of her mind with grief.

Copiously interviewed by the French press after winning the Camera d'Or (for best first feature) at Cannes in 1990, Vitaly Kanevsky, at 55, responded with a colourful outburst of humility and gratitude. Among his benefactors he includes, not surprisingly, the reinstated Soviet director Alexei Gherman (who insisted that Kanevsky's script deserved to be filmed) and, unexpectedly, Alan Parker, who brought the film to the attention of the Cannes programmers. Among obstacles that had to be overcome, Kanevsky lists an eight-year prison sentence, the certainty of the authorities at Lenfilm (his producers) that he had no talent whatsoever, and limited production funds, grudgingly released, that required him to shoot piecemeal with no guarantee that the film would be completed.

At times, claiming inspiration from



...a wholly Russian irony and affection

Dante and support from God, Kanevsky is dauntingly bombastic ("I see neither recognition nor success and have no interest in how my film is received"), but he is consistent on one point: everything that happens in the film happened to him, and this is how it was when he was twelve.

Kanevsky's reconstruction of his childhood environment, a morass of colliery waste, frozen slush, and gaunt, crowded buildings, offers the usual dispiriting images of labour-camp existence, an icy limbo of casual cruelty and wasted lives. Neither crushed nor hopeless, however, his younger self studies the world with entrepreneurial eyes: Valerka's bright, feverish gaze accepts what it sees with a boisterous resilience and a cheeky humour.

Offsetting the grim displacements of this bleak schooling – part *Zéro de conduite*, part *Germany, Year Zero* – Kanevsky's version of neo-realism incorporates a wholly Russian irony and affection, along with a pragmatic detachment that can study a drowning kitten or a burning corpse as events for which no alternative is conceivable. The mingling of pathos and melodrama reaches a peak with the distracted scholar who mixes flour with mud in the street and joyfully consumes the resulting mess, and another with the film's extraordinary concluding scene in which the dead girl's mother goes berserk and charges about naked on a broomstick.

Suddenly allowing his own voice to be heard instructing the cameraman during this epilogue (his film has already found its logical ending with a wonderful edgy close-up of two solemn infants preparing to take the place of Valerka and his loyal girlfriend), Kanevsky throws a perverse confusion into the painstaking actualities of his style by in effect reminding his audience that everything has been mere artifice and fakery. Its title based on a children's game, on Kanevsky's own attitude to his lifetime's project, and on the possible fate of Valerka (who, although attacked off-screen, can be assumed to have played dead in order to survive), the film steers an uneven course between extremes of self-awareness and moments of appealing innocence and simplicity.

The gentle development of the relationship between boy and girl, hostility alternating with an inquisitive tenderness, has a piercing accuracy, while episodes like the impassioned visit to Valerka's headmaster, or the strange encounter with an owl, are like unexplained fragments from some other story, ill-digested and incomplete. Filled with scraps of song (his first film school short, apparently, was a song with pictures added), Kanevsky's composition has the aspirations – along with the elisions and mysteries – of an epic ballad, often melodious despite itself. It makes a compulsive, unpredictable, unreliable, contradictory, and often remarkably beautiful autobiographical memoir from a powerful and refreshingly undisciplined voice.

Philip Strick

TV FILM

Bye, Bye, Baby

United Kingdom 1992

Director: Edward Bennett

Distributor

Channel Four

Production Company

Paravision

For Channel Four

Executive Producer

Linda Agran

Producer

Christopher Neame

Associate Producer

Malcolm R. Burgess

Production Executive

Nicholas Barton

Production Controller

Roy Stevens

Production Co-ordinator

Jennie Raglan

Production Manager

Clifton Brandon

Location Manager

Peter Elford

Cast

Gail Stevens

Assistant Directors

Simon Hinkly

Peter Heslop

Gilly Raddings

Screenplay

Jack Rosenthal

Director of Photography

Ivan Strasburg

In colour

Camera Operator

Jeremy Gee

Editor

Robin Sales

Production Designer

Martyn Hebert

Art Director

Richard Elton

Set Dresser

Julie Sheppard

Music Director

Tony Britten

Song

"Bye, Bye, Baby"

performed by Marilyn

Monroe

Costume Design

Sue Thomson

Wardrobe

Gilly Martin

Make-up Artists

Suzan Broad

Kim Burns

Sound Editors

Colin Chapman

Peter Lennard

Sound Recordist

Ken Weston

Sound Re-recordist

Rupert Scrivener

Royal Navy Adviser

Ronald Tasker

Cast

Ben Chaplin

Leo Wiseman

Jason Fleming

Channing

Colin Tierney

Skinner

Ewen Bremner

Galloway

Robert Portal

"Hyphenated"

Nicholas Gleaves

Archimedes

Lyndon Davies

Penhaligon

Jonathan Lacey

Pate

Mark Alex-Jones

Bradshaw

Simon Foy

Matthews

Timothy Andrews

Shelley

Chris Chandler

Oxenford

Geoffrey Hutchings

P.O. Swift

Shaughan Seymour

Psychiatrist

Benjamin Whitrow

Lieutenant

Commander Gray

Alexei Jawdokimov

Semeonoff

Michael Redfern

Drill Sergeant

Anthony Call

Army Doctor

Sylvia Rotter

German Teacher

Elisa Lusian

Helga

Viola Scheffel

Emma

Eva Maria Casper

Elke

Carlos Wagner

Helmuth

Isabelle Ferber

Ingrid

Tushka Bergen

Anna

David Roth

P. O. Harris

David Killick

Commander

Maria Redmond

Penny

John Hart Dyke

Professor Radcliffe

Yuri Stepanov

Foreign Man

Louise Downey

Stripper

Bruce Alexander

Lieutenant

Commander Harvey

Steve Nicolson

Navy Courier

Joe Tucker

Navy Guard

Anthony Meyerstone

Young Leo

Caroline Swift

Leo's Mother

Nigel Lindsay

Leo's Father

Boris Isarov

Soviet Naval Officer

James Purefoy

1st Sub-Lieutenant

Darren Brown

I.S.B.A.

Chris Pitt

S.B.A.

Jane Belshaw

Neighbour

Amanda Dickinson

Cashier

Aedin Moloney

Louisa Ruthven

Girls on Bus

Robert Baggeley

Telegraph Boy

Courtney Roper-Knight

William Cox

RAF Lads

Kim Kindersley

Army Officer

David Barrass

RAF Warrant Officer

Freddie Stuart

RSM

Andrew Tansey

Master at Arms

Mark Benton

Army Cook

Scott Cleverdon

Army Lad

Richard Stirling

2nd Sub-Lieutenant

Adrian Ross-Magenty

3rd Sub-Lieutenant

Anton Jawdokimov

Albatross

Liza Ross

Marilyn's Voice

8,495 feet

(at 25 fps) 91 minutes



From unfocused anger (Ben Chaplin)...

Germany, 1955. At a British naval base, Leo Wiseman spends the last four hours of his National Service scanning the radio waves in the hunt for "Albatross", a command vessel transmitting coded instructions to the Soviet fleet. Leo recalls how, two years ago, the Navy summoned him straight from university to be trained as a 'Coder Special' along with a dozen other reluctant recruits from widely different backgrounds... Bidding farewell to Manchester and to his pious Catholic girlfriend Penny, Leo finds a measure of consolation in a magazine photo of Marilyn Monroe, with whom sympathetic conversation is possible in the privacy of his bunk. Penny's regular letters warning him against sinful thoughts only add to his uneasiness during his basic training, as he gets to know his companions.

These include Skinner, who aggressively challenges the class system, Quilter-Smythe (known as "Hyphenated"), a compulsive racketeer, and Galloway, whose one aim is to get back to Glasgow. By staging a breakdown, Galloway loses Swift – the Petty Officer on the brink of retirement – his last chance of winning the Captain's Cup for best

squad. On brief leave, Leo is armed by the navy with a packet of condoms and urged by Skinner to pursue every girl in sight; disgusted, he returns to Marilyn. When Russian lessons are added to the daily routine, and homework added to guard duty, the squad is encouraged by Hyphenated to go on strike, refusing to learn Russian at the required rate.

At church parade, Leo is left gleefully to his own devices as the only Jew and is then punished for his misbehaviour by being deprived of Christmas leave. The Christmas lunch gives Galloway an excuse to complain of food poisoning, but the Medical Officer comes up with a different diagnosis and the jubilant Galloway is sent home for good, officially suffering from a broken heart. Leo gets a 'Dear John' letter from Penny, who says she will continue to pray for him, as will her new friend Godfrey. Despite pledges during the strike, the entire squad passes its Russian exams, Skinner with enough distinction to be assigned university training as an interpreter.

The rest of the group are transferred to Northern Germany, and when Skinner later rejoins them, he is a Mid- ▶

◀ shipman, now their supervisor. Angry at Skinner's authoritarian attitude, Leo is soon on charge for insubordination; he is assigned a menial task delivering mail, constantly journeying to Hamburg and back by train. After a wartime childhood in which his father was killed and millions of Jews massacred, he is unable to accept the Germans as allies; he reacts angrily when a German girl wants him to marry her so that she can get a passport, and when three schoolchildren on the train offer lessons in German in return for being taught English.

After a chaotic visit to a strip-club where he rescues his despised partner, Channing, from the MPs, Leo realises that nobody – not even Marilyn – is quite what they seem. Recognising that the schoolchildren suffered as much from the war as he did, he accepts the role of English teacher. For the final month of his National Service, Leo is reassigned to radio watch and joyfully counts the seconds to his release. While he is packing his bags, he at last hears "Albatross" clearly on the radio – but nobody believes him. He leaves "Albatross", Marilyn and the Navy to their own affairs and returns to Manchester.

● The prolific Jack Rosenthal, whose troubled youth has already inspired such television classics as *Bar Mitzvah Boy* and *London's Burning*, and screenplays like *The Evacuees*, has come up with another vivid assortment of reminiscences. Against the background of the National Service era, that peculiar exercise in militarism which signalled the initiation rites for innumerable British adolescents, he reviews various familiar problems connected with sex, education, and Jewishness, and finds them in retrospect enduringly funny. At the end of two futile years of training and game-playing, Rosenthal's fictional surrogate, Leo Wiseman, a moody youth of unfocused anger, admits that at least he knows who he is.

Reconstructing this experience as a casual mixture of past and present (the present, in this instance, being nothing later than 1955), Rosenthal alerts us during an early scene to Leo's later claim to self-discovery, so that everything that follows appears to illustrate this as the script's objective. In fact, what Leo now is – as he returns alone to Manchester after firmly overlooking the address of his former companions – remains a matter of guesswork, unless we can deduce from other Rosenthal works (*Yentl*, maybe, or *Spend, Spend, Spend?*) how Leo fared as a civilian. The main indication is the concluding song, "Bye, Bye, Baby", performed with conciliatory approval by Marilyn Monroe: by its literal farewell to infancy and its implied valediction to immaturity, the lyric suggests that the Monroe icon, too, had served its purpose by the onset of demobilisation, and that a real, if less reassuring humanity, awaits Leo's integration.

Confusingly, though, the discarded Marilyn, her picture left beside Leo's



...a sense of identity

empty bunk as if mere wallpaper, has been our guide for much of his story. "In the end", she tells us, "I knew more about him than he did", and indeed it is her voice-over that fills in a number of narrative gaps for us, along with a quantity of conversational comments and expressions of sympathy. It would have been helpful if, through Marilyn, Leo could have shared a little more of his self-knowledge with us.

Although Rosenthal writes plenty of good solid comedy, his parable has a serious point, to do with the conflict between opposites (which Leo's university lecturer teaches is the centre of every drama) and their reconciliation. Rosenthal accordingly encircles Leo with a sea of troubles. But in the crucial (and slightly glib) scene of acceptance by Leo of his own role as teacher to the German kids on the train, Leo puts aside preconception and prejudice and (to Marilyn's delight) starts being helpful for a change. More subtly, reconciliation is also the underlying solution to the film's other primary concerns – the class differences between the recruits, and the struggle for control by their regular Navy officers. Finally, it even encompasses the 'enemy' (an identical photo of Marilyn rests beside the 'Albatross' radio), who are interchangeably thanked with Leo's squad for their services to their country.

Thinking back to *Ascendancy*, we might expect Edward Bennett to lend a fine-cutting edge to Rosenthal's side-swipes at class warfare, in which the public-school members of the team largely make fools of themselves while the egalitarian militant appropriates the rank and airs of seniority as soon as the chance arises. But with a sturdy collection of Bergeracs, Morses and Poirots now to his credit, Bennett is more the professional than the polemicist, and has developed a fine skill in allowing his cast to give of their best. *Bye, Bye, Baby* is mainly a smooth-running vehicle for Rosenthal's one-liners, delivered with a special vehemence by old-stagers like Geoffrey Hutchings and Benjamin Whitrow.

As Leo, Ben Chaplin curls a suitably mutinous lip, while Maria Redmond is perfect as his gushingly puritanical betrayer. The film is stolen, all the same, by the earnest face of the German girl on the train (Viola Scheffel) whose announcement that her father died in the war is chillingly no more than a language exercise. "Have I said correctly?" she asks.

Philip Strick

TV FILM

Running Late

United Kingdom 1992

Director: Udayan Prasad

Distributor

BBC TV

Production Companies

Cinema Verity

For BBC Films

In association with

Peter Bowles

Productions

Executive Producer

Richard Broke

Producer

Verity Lambert

Associate Producer

Peter Bowles

Production Co-ordinator

Liz Buntin

Production Manager

Lorraine Goodman

Location Manager

Jonathan Wicks

Post-production

Co-ordinator

Danielle Brandon

Casting

Ann Fielden

Assistant Directors

Gary White

Kevin Westley

Screenplay

Simon Gray

Director of Photography

Jason Lehel

In colour

Camera Operator

Alan Almond

Editor

Barrie Vince

Production Designer

Michael Pickwood

Art Director

Henry Harris

Music

Richard Hartley

Costume Design

Lindy Hemming

Make-up Design

Carolyne Walsh

Sound Editor

Nigel Gatt

Sound Recordist

Albert Bailey

Sound Re-recordist

Brian Saunders

Cast

Peter Bowles

George Grant

Carole Nimmons

Sally Grant

Michael Byrne

Clitheroe

Adrian Rawlins

Michael Mitchum

Suzette Llewellyn

Carol

Jim McManus

Jack Chissick

Brian Bovell

Drivers

Lucy Bayler

Susan Lynch

Receptionists

Gino Melvazzi

Giorgio

Vincenzo Ricotta

Messenger

James Fleet

Grahame

Anne Lambton

Greta

Marcia Layton

Deborah

Karen Ford

Jan Chappell

Publishers

Ian McNeice

Norman

Del Baker

Security Man

Paul Slack

Bus Conductor

Geraldine Sherman

Mrs Zec

Leon Lissek

Harold Zec

Amanda Mealing

Betsy Grant

Ben Gray

Editor

Renée Asherson

Old Lady

David Ryall

Wicks

Mairéad Carty

Bank Teller

Roshan Seth

Mr Humphry

Paul Opacic

Paul McNeilly

Policemen

7,032 feet
(at 25 fps) 75minutes



A time to settle: Peter Bowles

● George Grant is a smug, irascible television presenter who specialises in grilling his interviewees. He is given a message to meet his wife Sally at the Pinocchio Club in central London, about "a matter of life and death", and borrows the cab fare from his researcher Michael Mitchum, who pleads to have his name featured in the programme credits. Arriving at the club by taxi, George is nearly run over by a lorry, and finds Sally leaving in a grey limousine with another man. Going home to check his telephone answering machine, he finds a message from her saying she has left him, and a message to her from her lover.

As he leaves, a bike messenger arrives with a package, and while George argues over it, his car is stolen. Finding the package contains a book of love poems, George tears it up in a rage, but it turns out to be a peace offering to his neighbour Grahame from his wife Greta, who is later furious with Grahame over the torn book. George takes a cab to Sally's publishing office and tries to find out what has happened from her friend Debbie, his ex-lover. He takes a bus to Golders Green to see his daughter Betsy, but the house she has been looking after is wrecked and its furious owners throw him out, along with Betsy's bike.

He rides it home, and climbing up to the window, thinks he sees Sally, but only finds Betsy leaving. The distraught Grahame, leaving to see a divorce lawyer, gives George a lift to the studio; nearly crashing the car en route, Grahame instantly decides to return to Greta. At the studio, George has his credit cards cancelled, but then finds the wallet he thinks he has lost; Mike agrees to help George find Sally, on condition that he gets his credit on the programme. Mike traces the grey car's number: it belongs to Miles N Style, and George sets off in a cab he shares with an eccentric old lady. Miles N Style turns out to be a car hire firm, whose owner agrees to tell George who hired the car, but only at a price.

George goes to the bank for money but loses his cashpoint card in the machine. Mr. Humphry, the manager, organises a cash transfer on George's credit card, and while they wait for the money, entertains George in style, expounding his philosophy of a "loving, caring bank"; George admits to him he did not know how to love Sally. But Humphry has been detaining him for the police, since the credit cards had been reported stolen. The police bundle George into a taxi, which takes him to the Pinocchio Club. Leaping out of the cab, George is run over by a lorry. As he dies, Sally looks over him and tells him that she had summoned him to tell him how much she loved him; George's spirit looks on.

● Simon Gray's entertaining exercise in metaphysical picaresque conflates a number of obvious models: the race-against-time comedy recently exemplified by the John Cleese vehicle *Clockwise* (as usual with the genre, time is infinitely flexible, although no con-

crete deadline hangs over George's head); the yuppie-in-peril strain of *After Hours*, in which a character slips out of a neatly scheduled life and into urban chaos; and a long literary tradition in which a hubristic character is redeemed through nightmare (e.g., the phallic anxiety of Gogol's *The Nose* – for nose here, read credit cards). Its central conceit, though – the twist that takes George back to the deferred moment of his death – recalls *Jacob's Ladder*, with its notion of a reprieve after death, during which a lost soul is given time to settle its debts before meeting its fate.

Running Late is essentially an old-fashioned moral tale, about a man who has to be immersed in the world before learning that life is too short not to love. As the enigmatic – saintly or demonic – Humphry points out to him, "You didn't love in order to lose, you lost in order to love". George is to be redeemed, but not quite yet: as the police officers hold him down, he weeps that he has lost his dignity, and Humphry orders him to accept the inevitable. He is manhandled out of the bank manager's beatifically daylight-lit office into a murky night, and carried off "to the other side" while the officers sing "Ere we go". Is he bound for heaven – to be redeemed by Sally's love – or hell?

Or is he in fact in hell already? The film's cosmology is by no means clear-cut, but it is naggingly omnipresent. Sally's lover – the man in white whom she has driven off with – announces himself as "your Prince of Light"; and George, whose portrait glowers in black from his office wall, is surely the Prince of Darkness, who roasts his interviewees in studio hell. London itself is hell – partly for those unfortunate whose lives are ruined by George and his grotesquely selfish daughter, partly because the most innocuous appearances can turn into traps. The sweet old lady with whom George shares a taxi sings "Early One Morning" with demonic zeal, before turning on George and identifying him as "that wicked man who hurts people on television".

By the time we reach Humphry's improbably mystical sanctum, we get some glimmer of the story's ending, but Gray's script leads teasingly up to it with hints: the way that George starts to shiver in the cab on the way to see Sally, the news that the grey car is reserved for funerals, and his constant parapraxis, "This is about my life – I mean my wife!". Peter Bowles' performance – masterfully ringing the changes on bluster, panic and distraction – holds the centre throughout, amid a cluster of effective cameos: Roshan Seth's mystical smoothie, Renée Asherson's strange old lady, George's awful warring neighbours, forever veering between glutinous sentimentality and primal scream agogies, and the enraged homeowners of Golders Green – even if the latter are perhaps a touch too close to the Telecom image.

Jonathan Romney

TV FILM

Seconds Out

United Kingdom 1992

Director: Bruce MacDonald

Distributor

BBC TV

Production Company

BBC Films

For Screen One

Executive Producer

Richard Broke

Producer

Simon Passmore

Production Associate

Matthew Hamilton

Location Managers

John Spencer

Adam Richards

Production Operatives

Supervisor:

Mike Jennings

Clive Brown

Vince McCourty

Castling Adviser

Ann Fielden

Assistant Directors

Dermont Boyd

David Reid

Emma Bridgeman-

Williams

Screenplay

Lynda La Plante

Director of Photography

Graham Frake

In colour

Visual Effects Designer

Andy Lazell

Graphic Design

Christine Büttner

Editor

David Martin

Production Designer

Oliver Bayldon

Music

Stewart Copeland

Costume Design

Frances Tempest

Wardrobe

Mark Foster

Make-up Design

Pam Meager

Sound Editor

Peter Baldock

Special Sound

Julian Wastall

Sound Recordist

Graham Ross

Sound Re-recordist

Paul Hamblin

Boxing Adviser

Chris Sanigar

Stunt Arranger

Clive Curtis

Cast

Steven Waddington

Murray Ritchie

Tom Bell

Jack

Colum Convey

Tony Farrington

Derek Newark

Jimmy

Clive Russell

Ronnie Black

Jack Watson

Old Mr Black

Nick Brimble

Brickman

Otis Munyang'iri

Smith

Frank Mills

Hunter

Amelda Brown

Miriam Black

Thomas Craig

Don Summers

Timothy Barlow

Romero

Alan Talbot

Don's Trainer

Jane Wymark

Aerobics Teacher

Roy Heather

Arnie Shaw

Julia Chambers

Sylvia

John Bardon

Billy

Billy Taylor

Scott

Jon McKenna

Phil

Helene Kvale

Julia Farrington

Nick Raggett

Solicitor

Amanda Tingle

Female Police Officer

Graham Gadd

Jack Burns

Announcers

Eric Mason

Ronnie's Corner Man

Sophie Dix

Receptionist

8,400 feet

(at 25 fps) 90 minutes

In a London gym, an elderly trainer, Jack, instructs Murray Ritchie, his young protégé who is coming up for a title match. But a rival promoter, Tony Farrington, is after Murray, and makes him an offer to break his contract with Jack and his manager Jimmy. Murray refuses. Not long afterwards, Miriam, a masseuse in a sex parlour, is raped, and on the basis of her evidence, Murray is charged. Angry and embittered after he misses his title match, Murray feels that he can no longer stay with Jack and Jimmy, and offers himself to Farrington. But Farrington now implies that he is only prepared to let him fight in unlicensed matches.

That evening, at one such bout, Murray challenges Miriam about the rape. She finally reveals that her real attacker was the boxer in the ring, a brain-damaged ex-convict, Ronnie Black, who also happens to be her husband. Later that night, Murray catches Smith, a tough kid who hangs around Jack's gym, stealing a car radio. He tries to convince him not to be drawn



Other people's dramas: Steven Waddington

into a life of crime, but Smith throws Murray's rape charge up at him. Jack and Jimmy discuss the bleak future of the gym. Aware that he has no other life, Jack decides to sell an old prize-boxing belt in order to encourage Murray to come back.

Murray, who now rightly suspects that he was set up over the alleged rape by Farrington, demands to be allowed to fight Ronnie Black. Fired by a recent showdown with Ronnie, Farrington agrees. But Farrington's title contender then slips on a bar of soap and injures himself too badly to fight. This makes Murray the new title contender, and Farrington realises that unless he cancels the match with Ronnie, the unlicensed fight will put Murray out of the running for the title. Jack and Jimmy have also heard the news and join in the race to find Murray and stop that night's match.

Murray reaches the venue before anyone can find him. Miriam arrives with Ronnie, vainly pleading with him not to fight any more. Farrington and his partner Brickman turn up, argue with Miriam, and then try to stop Ronnie. Jack and Jimmy also appear and, in the ensuing mêlée, manage to get Murray away, although not before he has delivered a debilitating blow to Ronnie. Farrington and Brickman content themselves with the prospect of future matches. Ronnie's father tends to him, telling him stories of the boxing greats. Later, cleared of the rape charge, Murray prepares for his title fight at the Royal Albert Hall.

Having been lauded for her ability to bring strong women to life in men's worlds, first with *Widows* and then *Prime Suspect*, Lynda La Plante is now immersing herself more conventionally in those worlds, with the TV series *Civvies* and this Screen One film about a young boxer. Top of the list of subjects to be explored in 'sensitive' films about sportsmen must be male bonding, and here La Plante is potently subtle. The relationship between the honest, straightforward Murray and

his obsessive trainer Jack reverberates with passion, largely through Tom Bell's almost incantatory murmurings about his star boxer. While Murray and Jack stray into the realm of sublimated homo-eroticism, for Ronnie Black and his father boxing is a means of escape into a fantasy world.

At odds with these pairings are two quite different boxing relationships. Jaded masseuse and boxing wife Miriam has nothing left but cynicism; to her, sport is an empty display of macho heroics and of vicarious enjoyment on the part of an audience of cowards. As Miriam's disgust and despair grow (and become more vocal), she seems to become one huge, ghostly grimace. That intensity of image is matched by the ruthless promoter Farrington, who is played by Colum Convey as a disconcertingly weak spirit – all fluttering eyelashes, twitching and screeching – beneath the tough exterior. All these extraordinary, almost tragic empty vessels tend to the dark side of humorous – which is why, when the film consciously attempts to be funny, it runs into difficulty.

The final chase in the search for Murray has moments of pure slapstick – cars collide, Farrington absentmindedly pours petrol on his trouser leg while talking on his mobile phone – which destroy the fatalistic tension and turn the characters into cartoons. Innumerable short scenes, meanwhile, give the impression that too much time is taken up filling the audience in on bits of information. And while there is something to be said for the impassiveness of Steven Waddington's Murray, as the figure on whom others project their dramas, he only seems to come to life when it is necessary for the plot. Instead, La Plante latches on to the young bystander Smith as both Greek chorus and a surrogate, more charismatic Murray. The effect rather reflects the film itself: at best, immediate, intelligent and understated; at worst, unsure how to develop the drama it has created.

Amanda Lipman

video

Mark Kermode reviews this month's rental/rental premiere releases and William Green new retail/retail premiere videos

★ Highlights

Reviews in *Monthly Film Bulletin* (MFB) and *Sight and Sound* are cited in parentheses

Rental

All I Want for Christmas

CIC Video VHB 2600

USA 1991

Certificate U Director Robert Lieberman
Horrible, saccharine-sweet movie about two kids who conspire to fix their parents' broken marriage. Even Leslie Nielsen (as Santa) and Lauren Bacall (as the ex-Broadway grandmother) fail to save the day. (S&S February 1992)

At Play in the Fields of the Lord

EV EVV 1227

USA 1992

Certificate 15 Director Hector Babenco
Lavish but thematically thin adaptation of Peter Matthieson's acclaimed novel about religious and economic colonisation on the Amazon. Boasting an all-star cast and gorgeous location photography. (S&S April 1992)

Daydream Believer

Columbia TriStar CVT 16897

Australia 1991

Certificate 15 Director Kathy Mueller
Curiously misjudged psycho-sex comedy about childhood traumas, artificial insemination and horses. Bizarre script, flat performances and uncertain direction. (S&S August 1992)

Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead

First Independent VA 20170

USA 1991

Certificate 15 Director Stephen Herek
★ Lively teen comedy from the director of *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*. Five suburban kids are left to their own devices when their minder dies. Excellent fun. (S&S June 1992)

Grand Canyon

FoxVideo 5596

USA 1991

Certificate 15 Director Lawrence Kasdan
A group of middle-aged Los Angeles inhabitants attempt to make sense of their chaotic lives. Kasdan expands on the themes of *The Big Chill* in this superbly cast but schmaltzy soap opera. (S&S May 1992)

The Hand that Rocks the Cradle

Hollywood Pictures/Buena Vista D913342

USA 1992

Certificate 15 Director Curtis Hanson
Rebecca De Mornay plays a psycho nanny from hell in a formulaic mainstream chiller, shamelessly ripped off from William Friedkin's *The Guardian*. Emotionally manipulative and cynical. (S&S May 1992)

The Lawnmower Man

First Independent VA 20172

UK/USA 1992

Certificate 15 Director Brett Leonard
★ Stephen King sued to have his name taken off this lively sci-fi fantasy which bears no relation to his short story. A scientist uses virtual-reality technology to turn a simple gardener into a 'cyber-God'. Enjoyable nonsense. (S&S June 1992)

Lost in Siberia

High Fliers HFV 8223

UK/USSR 1991

Certificate 15 Director Alexander Mitta
Powerful docu-drama concerning a British archeologist's imprisonment in a Siberian prison camp under Stalin. Impressive central performance by Anthony Andrews. (S&S May 1992)

The Mambo Kings

Warner PEV 12308

USA 1992

Certificate 15 Director Arne Glimcher
★ Terrific adaptation of Oscar Hijuelos' novel, bursting with vitality and passion, cracking performances and hot mambo tunes. Two musician brothers flee Havana in 1952 to become the toast of New York, but their past catches up with them. (S&S June 1992)

Medicine Man

Guild 8674

USA 1992

Certificate PG Director John McTiernan
An ageing scientist (Sean Connery) attempts to discover a cure for cancer in the Amazonian rainforest. Laughable eco-thriller. (S&S June 1992)

Meet the Feebles

Island World IWCV 1045

New Zealand 1989

Certificate 18 Director Peter Jackson
Puerile, unfunny *Muppet Show* pastiche, from the talented writer-director of *Bad Taste*. A menagerie of puppets wallow in excremental humour. (S&S May 1992)

Memoirs of an Invisible Man

Warner PEV 12310

USA 1992

Certificate PG Director John Carpenter
★ Inventive and intelligent adaptation of H.F. Saint's tale about a man's fraught attempts to live with invisibility. Mind-boggling special effects, excellent direction and good performance from Chevy Chase. (S&S June 1992)

Mobsters

CIC Video VHA 1547

USA 1991

Certificate 18
Director Michael Karbelnikoff
Dreary tale of the early lives of New York gangsters. Too naively romanticised for adults, and too violent for kids, despite the alluring presence of teen heartthrob Christian Slater. (S&S March 1992)

Ruby

USA 1992

Columbia TriStar NVT 14253

Certificate 15 Director John MacKenzie
★ Excellent reworking of the Kennedy murder myth, with Danny Aiello as Jack Ruby, determined to spill the beans on Federal involvement. Intriguing script by Stephen Davis and economical direction by MacKenzie. Also starring Sherilyn Fenn. (S&S July 1992)

Rush

MGM/UA PEV 52303

USA 1991

Certificate 18 Director Lili Fini Zanuck
Ropey drugs yarn about an undercover



Reworking myths: Danny Aiello in 'Ruby'

officer (Jennifer Jason Leigh) who becomes addicted to her job. Jason Patric is in fine form as her streetwise partner, but the film is more a snore than a rush. (S&S April 1992)

Secret Friends

20.20 Vision NVT 16888

UK 1991

Certificate 18 Director Dennis Potter
Typical fare from writer Potter, hindered by a hammy performance by Alan Bates. An illustrator takes a train journey, during which he is troubled by memories of his childhood and visions of a woman. (S&S October 1992)

Wayne's World

CIC Video VHB 2628

USA 1992

Certificate PG Director Penelope Spheeris
Only six months after its blockbusting theatrical release, the *Wayne's World* gags have worn unbelievably thin. "Party on", "not", "babelicious" and all the other Wayne slang is now just so "five minutes ago"! (S&S June 1992)

Rental premiere

Afterburn

Columbia TriStar CVT 13285

USA 1992

Certificate 15 Director Robert Markowitz
Producer Paul Kurta Screenplay Elizabeth Chandler Lead Actors Laura Dern, Robert Loggia, Michael Rooker, Welker White 102 minutes
True tale of an air force widow's attempts to uncover the cause of her husband's death. Direction is pacy and the cast are impressive (particularly Rooker), but the story is mundane.

Animal Instincts

20.20 Vision NVT 18654

USA 1992

Certificate 18 Director Gregory Hippolyte
Producer Andrew Garroni Screenplay George Deseinties Lead Actors Maxwell Caulfield, Jan Michael Vincent, Mitch Gaylord, Delia Sheppard 92 minutes
Hot from *Dance with Death*, Maxwell Caulfield cements his reputation as the new king of silly erotic thrillers. A policeman and his wife play voyeuristic sex games to save their marriage.

Bad Channels

CIC Video VHB 2667

USA 1992

Certificate PG Director Ted Nicolaou
Producer Keith Payson Screenplay Jackson Barr Lead Actors Paul Hipp, Martha Quinn, Aaron Lustig, Ian Patrick Williams, Charlie Spradling 89 minutes
A rubbery alien shrinks women and keeps them in jars. A hip radio station provides the key to his fleshy desires. Mindlessly jolly B-movie nonsense.

Criminal Behaviour

Braveworld BRV 10146

USA 1992

Certificate PG Director Michael Miller
Executive Producer Preston Fischer Screenplay Wendell Mayes Lead Actors Farrah Fawcett, A. Martinez 88 minutes
TV-movie adaptation of Ross Macdonald's pulp novel. A lawyer (Fawcett) from a family of crooks defends a nurse on

a robbery charge and becomes embroiled in murder and mystery.

Criss Cross

MGM/UA PEV 52496

USA 1992

Certificate 15 Director Chris Menges
Producer Anthea Sylbert Screenplay Scott Sommer Lead Actors Goldie Hawn, David Arnett, Arliss Howard, James Gammon, Keith Carradine 97 minutes
Sentimental but affecting movie, from former cameraman Menges. A woman is deserted by her Vietnam vet husband and is forced to bring up their young son alone. Strong performances and an understated script save this from becoming too schmaltzy.

Deadly Bet

VPD AMP 111

USA 1991

Certificate 18 Director Richard W. Munchkin Producers Joseph Merhi, Richard Pepin Screenplay Joseph Merhi, Robert Tiffe Lead Actors Jeff Wincott, Charlene Tilton, Steven Vincent Leigh 90 minutes
Cheap martial-arts action thriller. A gambling fighter loses a bet in Las Vegas and has to bash his way out of trouble.

Defenseless

Fox Movie Premiere 2193

USA 1990

Certificate 18 Director Martin Campbell
Producers Renee Missel, David Bombyk Screenplay James Hicks Lead Actors Barbara Hershey, Sam Shepard, J.T. Walsh, Mary Beth Hurt 96 minutes
★ Effective (if somewhat predictable) thriller, sharply written and directed. An attorney investigates the murder of her married lover and unearths disturbing underworld connections. Tense and engrossing.

Fatal Exposure

Rio MSG 204

USA (Year Unknown)

Certificate 18 Director/Producer Peter B. Good Screenplay Chris Painter Lead Actors Blake Bahner, Ena Henderson, Julie Austin, Dan Schmale, Renee Cline 83 minutes
Sleazy, misogynistic horror spoof about a photographer (and descendant of Jack the Ripper) who photographs women in the throes of violent death. The first ten minutes of this video are from another unidentifiable slasher film.

Foxy Lady

Rio MSG 209

Italy (Year Unknown)

Certificate 18 Director George Raminto
Producer Massimo Manasse Screenplay George Raminto Lead Actors Dedora Caprioglia, Steve Bond, Sharon Twomey 84 minutes
Retitled erotic thriller, probably dating from the late 70s/early 80s. A professional hitman (Bond) spies on, and is seduced by, a young femme fatale. Not as seedy as the cover suggests.

In the Shadow of a Killer

Odyssey ODY 331

USA 1991

Certificate PG Director Alan Metzger
Producer Bob Markell Screenplay Philip Rosenberg Lead Actors Scott Bakula, Lindsay Frost, Miguel Ferrer, James Russo,



Virtual-Reality: 'The Lawnmower Man'

J.T. Walsh 89 minutes

Involving TV movie, loosely based on the experiences of long-time William Friedkin cohort, Randy Jurgensen. A detective's unwillingness to send a cop-killer to the electric chair generates ridicule and violent reprisals. Familiar territory yet engaging.

The Last of His Tribe

20.20 Vision NVT 15405

USA 1992

Certificate 15 Director Harry Hook
Producers John Levoff, Robert Lovenheim Screenplay Stephen Harrigan Lead Actors Graham Greene, Jon Voight, Anne Archer, David Ogden Stiers, Jack Blessing 89 minutes
Well-mounted, worthy drama set in Orville, 1911. The last Native-American survivor of a massacred tribe is befriended by a philanthropic academic. Moving but unoriginal.

Leaving Normal

CIC Video VHA 1602

USA 1992

Certificate PG Director Edward Zwick
Producer Lindsay Doran Screenplay Edward Solomon Lead Actors Christine Lahti, Meg Tilly, Lenny von Dohlen, James Gammon 110 minutes
★ Beautiful, off-beat comedy-drama, finely penned by the creator of *Bill & Ted*. A disillusioned wife and a feisty cocktail waitress with a mysterious past hit the road in search of their dreams. Tilly is great, but Lahti steals the show.

Liquid Dreams

High Fliers HFV 8220

USA 1991

Certificate 18 Director Mark Manos
Producers Zane W. Levitt, Diane Firestone Screenplay Zack Davis, Mark Manos Lead Actors Richard Steinmetz, Candice Daly, Barry Dennen, Mink Stole, John Doe 89 minutes
★ Tacky but enjoyable Videodrome derivative, set in an indeterminate future. A young woman infiltrates a fascistic organisation specialising in non-physical pleasure. Some nice ideas and a few visceral shocks which are padded out with the usual erotic sleaze fare.

Midnight Ride

Warner PEV 54233

USA 1992

Certificate 18 Director Robert Bralver
Producer Ovidio G. Assonitis Screenplay Russel V. Manzatt, Robert Bralver Lead Actors Michael Dudikoff, Mark Hamill, Savina Gersak,

Robert Mitchum 89 minutes

★ Action man Dudikoff's best film yet. A policeman trailing his errant wife, crosses paths with a serial killer. Bralver injects tension into the proceedings and extracts a superior performance from Dudikoff.

The Naked Truth

Medusa MO 387

USA 1992

Certificate 15 Director/Producer/Screenplay Nico Mastorakis Lead Actors Robert Caso, Kevin Schon, Courtney Gibbs, Herb Edelman 99 minutes
Dismal *Naked Gun* rip-off. Two horrible guys don drag to infiltrate a beauty contest. Hundreds of cameos (from Little Richard to Zsa Zsa Gabor) but no laughs whatsoever.

Nasty Boys 3: Crack House

CIC Video VHA 1583

USA 1990

Certificate 15 Directors Rob Cohen, James Quinn Producer Lynn H. Guthrie Screenplay Brad Markowitz, Robert Palm Lead Actors Dennis Franz, Benjamin Bratt, Don Franklin, Craig Hurley, Jeff Kaake 95 minutes
Made-for-TV action thriller set amidst the drug-ridden streets of LA. When undercover crime fighters the 'Nasty Boys' are hired to transport and protect an FBI witness, one of their daughters is kidnapped.

Overruled

Odyssey ODY 327

USA 1992

Certificate 15 Director Jud Taylor
Producer Dennis E. Doty Screenplay Mimi Rotherman Schapiro, Bill Wells Lead Actors John Getz, John Rubenstein, Ron Frazier, Adam Storke, Lee Grant 92 minutes
Tedious true-life TV drama. The mother of a murdered teenager, whose killer is released after only a brief sentence, vows to avenge her daughter's death.

Rage and Honour

Medusa MC 383

USA 1992

Certificate 18 Director Terence H. Winkless
Producer Donald Paul Pemrick Screenplay Terence H. Winkless Lead Actors Cynthia Rothrock, Richard Norton, Terri Treas, Brian Thompson 92 minutes
More knuckle-cracking antics from martial arts priestess Rothrock. Rothrock plays a teacher who joins forces with an undercover cop to wage war on street gangs and drugs. Divertingly silly, with plenty of senseless punch-ups.

Seduction

20.20 Vision NVT 16963

USA 1992

Certificate 18 Director Michael Ray Rhodes
Producer Carroll Newman Screenplay Barry Brown, Robert Glass Lead Actors Victoria Principal, John Terry, John O'Hurley, W. Morgan Sheppard 92 minutes
Three episodes of a TV mini-series, based on Himan Brown's radio show *Inner Sanctum*. Saucy nostalgia.

Seed People

CIC Video VHB 2654

USA 1992

Certificate 15 Director Peter Manogian
Producer Anne Kelly Screenplay Jackson Barr Lead Actors Sam Hennings, Andrea

Roth, Dan Witherspoon, Dave Dunard, Holly Fields 89 minutes
More laughable sci-fi B-movie fodder from executive producer Charles Band. Comet Valley is plagued by botanical aliens who infiltrate the community. A shameless *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* rip-off with tongue firmly in cheek.

Street War

Braveworld BRV 10145
USA 1992

Certificate 15 Director/Producer Dick Lowry
Screenplay T.S. Cook Lead Actors Ray Sharkey, Peter Boyle, Michael Boatman, Mario Van Peebles 88 minutes
Low-budget action from the made-for-TV *In the Line of Duty* series. Big name star Van Peebles appears only briefly - his murder sparks a quest for vengeance by his former partner.

Wild Orchid: The Red Shoe Diary

EV EVV 1233
USA 1992

Certificate 18 Director Zalman King
Producers David Saunders, Rafael Eisenman Screenplay Patricia Louisianna Knop, Zalman King Lead Actors David Duchovny, Billy Wirth, Brigitte Bako 104 minutes
Pilot for the 'controversial' US TV series. A young woman with an attentive partner enjoys sexual escapades with another man. Duchovny is great as the tortured cuckold and the final homo-erotic wrestling match is fun, but otherwise it's soft-porn masquerading as a coke commercial.

Retail

Backdraft

CIC Video VHR 1514
USA 1991 Price £12.99

Certificate 15 Director Ron Howard
★ Donald Sutherland, Robert De Niro and Kurt Russell star in this scorching special effects action adventure about Chicago firefighters. A pyromaniac's delight. (S&S August 1991)

Bullseye!

Castle CVI 1446
USA 1990 Price £10.99

Certificate 15 Director Michael Winner
Clodhopping caper about two con men (Michael Caine, Roger Moore) posing as scientists. Dated in every way. (MFB No. 682)

The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari

(Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari)

Aikman Archive JEF 00016
Germany 1919 Price £14.99

Certificate PG Director Robert Wiene
★ Wiene's experiment in terror, along with his original Expressionist sets, has influenced many film-makers since. A fairground hypnotist appears to have sinister control over his chosen victim. (MFB No. 545) B/W Silent

Captain America

Castle CVI 1439
USA 1989 Price £10.99

Certificate PG Director Albert Pyun
Marvel Comics' greatest patriot returns from the Arctic in time to save the world from evil villain Red Skull. Schoolboy heroics. (MFB No. 684)

City Slickers

First Independent VA 30258
USA 1991 Price £10.99

Certificate 15 Director Ron Underwood
★ Three middle-aged urban neurotics go on a self-discovery cattle drive. The movie is peppered with sprightly dialogue and Jack Palance is memorable as a cowpoke. (S&S November 1991)

The Commitments

FoxVideo 1906
USA 1991 Price £12.99 (Box Set £19.99)

Certificate 15 Director Alan Parker
★ A motley group of young Dubliners form a soul band and start on the road to success. A delightful, gritty fantasy full of fresh faces and great music. (S&S October 1991)

The Damned (La Cudita degli Dei)

Tartan Video BDV 11059
(Laser Disc TVL 009)
Italy/West Germany 1969 Price £15.99 (Laser Disc £34.95)

Certificate 15 Director Luchino Visconti
★ The story of a grand bourgeois family

who are corrupted by Nazism in the 30s. Visconti lovingly paints the opulence and decadence of the age. With Dirk Bogarde, Ingrid Thulin and Helmut Berger. (MFB No. 436) Widescreen

Les Diaboliques

Aikman Archive JEF 00014
France 1954 Price £14.99

Certificate PG
Director Henri-Georges Clouzot
★ A classic study in cold-blooded murder. Starring Clouzot's wife Vera opposite Simone Signoret, the thriller climaxes with a surprise ending which makes *Fatal Attraction* look pale by comparison. (MFB No. 264) Subtitles B/W

Doña Herlinda and Her Son

(Doña Herlinda y su hijo)

Pride Video PRI 11001
Mexico 1986 Price £14.99

Certificate 15
Director Jaime Humberto Hermosillo
Intriguing sex comedy in which a mother determines to take charge of the life and the lover of her gay son. (MFB No. 641) Subtitles

Fatal Attraction (Special Edition)

CIC Video VHR 2685
USA 1987 Price £12.99

Certificate 18 Director Adrian Lyne
Special edition of the notorious 'jilted woman' thriller, with the added piquancy of an introduction by Lyne and a discussion of the original script's alternative endings - one of which is shown. (MFB No. 648) Widescreen

Freddie as F.R.O.7.

EUK/Starvision EUKV 1004
UK 1992 Price £12.99

Certificate U Director Jon Acevski
Animated children's movie about a prince who becomes a secret agent frog. (S&S August 1992)

Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse

Tartan Video/Blue Dolphin TVT 007
(Laser Disc TVT 007)
USA 1991 Price £15.99 (Laser Disc £29.95)

Certificate 15 Directors Fax Bahr, George Hickenlooper
★ Fascinating documentary about the making of Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*.



Music for the soul: 'The Commitments'

The footage includes some intriguing sequences dropped from the completed epic. (S&S January 1992) *Widescreen*

Homocide

First Independent VA 30260

USA 1991 Price £10.99

Certificate 15 Director David Mamet

★ A Jewish cop (Joe Mantegna) questions his sense of identity and ethnicity while investigating an apparently banal murder case. A quirky, introverted thriller. (S&S November 1991)

Kindergarten Cop

CIC Video VHR 1493

USA 1990 Price £12.99

Certificate 15 Director Ivan Reitman
Arnold Schwarzenegger plays a detective unconvincingly disguised as a playschool teacher, and shows that fame has not diminished his talent for self-deprecating comedy. (MFB No. 685)

Let Him Have It

First Independent VA 30259

UK 1991 Price £10.99

Certificate 15 Director Peter Medak

★ Heart-on-the-sleeve reconstruction of the 1950s Bentley/Craig murder case, which forcefully argues the innocence of the one who was hanged. (S&S October 1991)

March of the Wooden Soldiers

(aka *Babes in Toyland*)

Aikman Archive JEF 00015

USA 1934 Price £14.99

Certificate PG

Directors Gus Meins, Charles R. Rogers
Curious song-and-dance pantomime with Charlotte Henry as Little Bo-Peep, backed up by Laurel and Hardy as two clowns whose model soldiers protect Toyland from an invasion. (MFB No. 12) *B/W*

1900 (Novecento)

FoxVideo World Cinema WC 1343

Italy/France/West Germany 1976

Price £19.99 (2 Tapes)

Certificate 18 Director Bernardo Bertolucci
★ A sprawling and ambitious recreation of rural North Italy during the Fascist era, with an eminent international cast uneasily acting out the director's idealistic view of the class struggle. (MFB No. 528)

Nosferatu

(*Nosferatu – Eine Symphonie des Grauens*)

Aikman Archive JEF 00005

Germany 1922 Price £14.99

Certificate PG

Director Friedrich W. Murnau

★ The original vampire movie – unashamedly pirated from Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula*, but invested with Murnau's own startling visual imagination. (MFB No. 481) *B/W* *Silent*

Quigley Down Under

MGM/UA PES 52174

USA 1990 Price £10.99

Certificate 15 Director Simon Wincer
Troublesooter cowboy Tom Selleck finds himself in Australia. Excellent acting by Laura San Giacomo and Alan Rickman. (MFB No. 687)

Suburban Commando

EV EVV 1217

USA 1991 Price £10.99

Certificate PG Director Burt Kennedy
Wrestling star Hulk Hogan plays an



Catherine Deneuve in 'Belle de Jour'

earth-stranded intergalactic bounty hunter who rents a room from Christopher Lloyd and Shelley Duvall. The comedy is obvious but cheerful. (S&S January 1992)

Retail premiere

Beauty and the Beast

Braveworld STV 2179

UK 1992 Price £10.99

Certificate PG Directors David Thwaites

(Animation), Timothy Forder

(Supervising) Supervisor Mary Swindale

Screenplay Paul Levinson, Nathalie Harrison
Voices Jason Connery, Michael Hordern, Christopher Lee, Penelope Keith
75 minutes

Another version of the fairy tale, with Beauty drawn as an all-purpose teenager and the Beast as a loveable, hirsute elder brother of Top Cat.

Christmas on Division St.

Odyssey ODY 313ST

USA 1991 Price £10.99

Certificate PG Director George Kaczender

Producers Richard Heus, Barry Morrow

Screenplay Barry Morrow Lead Actors

Fred Savage, Hume Cronin, Badja Djola,

Jim Byrnes 93 minutes

In this true-life story, a homeless man on the wintry streets of Philadelphia is taken care of by a wealthy schoolboy. Sentimental Christmas tale.

Green Animation

Connoisseur CR 095

UK 1992 Price £12.99

Certificate E Producer World Wildlife Fund
55 minutes

Twenty-six short variations on an ecological theme, animated by a number of studios, colleges and workshops in the UK, Russia, Poland and Denmark. Introduced by actor Tony Robinson and animator Peter Lord.

No Skin Off My Ass

Pride Video PRI 11004

Canada 1992 Price £14.99

Certificate 18 Director Bruce LaBruce

Producer Jürgen Bruning Screenplay Bruce

LaBruce Lead Actors Bruce LaBruce, Klaus von Bruker, Caroline Azar, Laurel Purvis, Kate Ashley 70 minutes
Low-budget contribution to the new queer cinema, in which a punk hairdresser finds happiness with a skinhead, helped by the latter's lesbian sister.

Odin

Manga 1006

Japan MANZ 1985 Price £12.99

Certificate 15 Director Yoshizaku Yasuhiko

Screenplay Kazuo Kashiwara, Toshio

Masuda, Eiichi Yamamoto 93 minutes

More comic strip adventures based on Japan's manga cartoons.

Two of Us

RTM/DTK 001

UK 1987 Price £12.99

Certificate 15 Director/Producer Roger Tonge

Screenplay Leslie Stewart Lead Actors

Jason Rush, Lee Whitlock, Jenny Jay,

Zoe Nathenson, Kathy Burke 60 minutes

Uncut version of a BBC TV film about two boys who run away from school on a 'honeymoon', banned at the time and only shown later after the ending was changed.

Venus Wars

Manga MANV 1005

Japan 1985 Price £12.99

Certificate 15 Director Yoshinobu Nishizaki

Screenplay Kazuo Kashiwara, Toshio

Masuda, Eiichi Yamamoto 104 minutes

Manga comic heroes go hyperspace in this animated adventure set in the future.

The Wizard of Oz

Aikman Archive JEF 00006

USA 1922 Price £15.99

Certificate PG Director Larry Semon

Production Company Chadwick Pictures

Screenplay Larry Semon, Leon Lee,

based on the novel by L. Frank Baum

Lead Actors Larry Semon, Oliver Hardy,

Dorothy Dwan 70 minutes

★ Early version of Dorothy's adventures in the Land of Oz, showcasing the talents of silent comedy star Larry Semon as the Scarecrow and Oliver Hardy as the Tin Woodsman. *B/W* *Silent*

Retail collections

Early Russian Cinema

Beginnings/Folklore and Legend/Starewicz's

Fantasies/Provincial Variations/Chardynin's

Pushkin/Class Distinctions/Evgenii Bauer/Iakov

Protazanov/High Society/The End of An Era

BFI Tape Nos. 1-10 (10 Tapes)

Russia 1908-1917 £19.95 each

(Box Set £165)

Certificate N/A Directors V. Romashkov,

Kai Hansen, André

Maitre, Vladimir Siversen, Vasili

Goncharov, Wladyslaw Starewicz, Evgenii

Slavinskii, Nikolai Larin, Petr Chardynin,

Evgenii Bauer, Iakov Protazanov,

Elizaveta Thiemann, Eduard Puchal'skii

★ An arrangement between the BFI and the Russian film archive Gosfilmofond

has made a selection of rare silent

Russian films available for the first time

on video. A remarkable look at early

Russian film culture and life, carefully

transferred on to video with improvised

music added. Subtitles *B/W*

Jane Campion: Three Films

Passionless Moments/A Girl's Own Story/Peel

Connoisseur CR092

Australia 1984/1983/1982 £14.99

Certificate 15 Director Jane Campion

★ Three early short films by the highly regarded New Zealand director, reflecting her experience of childhood in the Antipodean suburbs. The longest piece – *A Girl's Own Story* – is an uncompromising account of the experiences of three teenagers. (MFB No. 678) *B/W* & *Colour*

Laurel & Hardy Shorts

The Fixer-Uppers/Men o'War/Scram!

Vision Video VVL HRO

USA 1935/1929/1932 £10.99

Certificate U Directors Charles

Rogers/Robert Foster/Ray McCarey

Producer Hal Roach Screenplay Unknown

Lead Actors Stan Laurel, Olivier Hardy

Three more from the Hal Roach library –

the first being a remake of the silent

Laurel and Hardy short *Slipping Wives*.

The other two feature Stan and Ollie

as sailors and pavement vagrants. *B/W*

Luis Buñuel Collection

Belle de Jour/The Discreet Charm of the

Bourgeoisie (La Charme discret de la

bourgeoisie)/That Obscure Object of Desire

(Cet Obscur objet du desir)

Electric EP 0007/0008/0009

France 1966/1972/1977

Price £15.99 each (3 Tapes)

Certificates 18/15/15 Director Luis Buñuel

★ Three first-class films from Buñuel's later period, with the collaboration of screenwriter Jean-Claude Carrière who helped inject comedy and warmth into his sharp attacks on civilised manners and social hypocrisy. Catherine Deneuve stars in the famous *Belle de Jour*, the two later films mark a return to surrealism for the director. (MFB Nos. 407/469/530) Subtitles

Shakespeare: The Animated Tales

Romeo and Juliet/A Midsummer Night's

Dream/Twelfth Night/Macbeth/Hamlet/

The Tempest

Island World IWCV

1010/1011/1012/1013/1014/1015

(6 Tapes/Box Set: 1016)

UK/Russia 1992 Price £8.99 each

(Box set £49.99)

Certificate E Series Director Dave Edwards

Adaptations Leon Garfield Animators

Efim Gamburg, Robert Saakyants,

Maria Muat, Nikolai Serebryakov,

Natalia Orlova, Stanislav Sokolov Voices

Brian Cox, Fiona Shaw, Tilda Swinton,

William Rushton, Bernard Hill,

Timothy West 30 minutes each

Six popular but very abbreviated

dramas adapted from Shakespeare.

Differing animation methods are used

from puppetry to traditional cel. Most

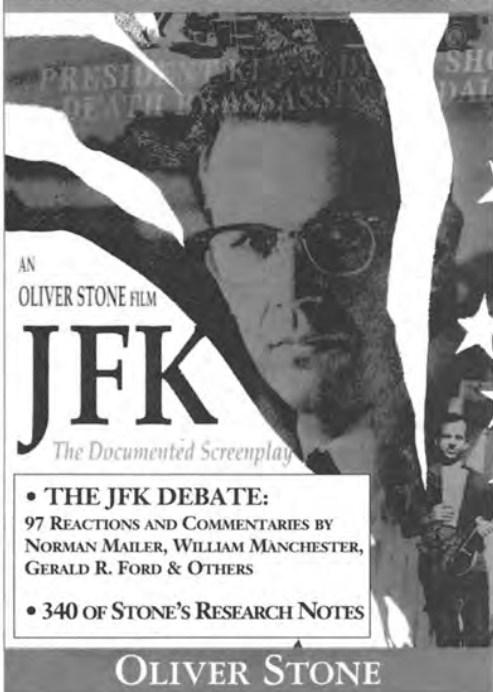
successful are the tragedies, especially

Hamlet, which is done with oil on glass.



Growing up: 'Passionless Moments'

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The New Republic

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Cut up

Philip Jenkinson

With regard to the correspondence over *Metropolis*, there is absolutely no doubt whatsoever that Moroder's version is the most complete. The reason it runs a little shorter than other versions is that nearly all the intertitles were replaced with subtitles. It was also transferred at the usual telecine speed of 25 frames per second.

Jeff Aikman is wrong in saying the correct speed is 18 frames per second. By the mid-20s, most films were cranked between 20 and 22 frames per second, as was the case with *Metropolis*. Even projected at 24 frames per second, there are few sequences that appear 'speeded up'. I am somewhat surprised to note Mr Aikman claims he is in possession of the original 35mm US release negative. When the Museum of Modern Art wanted to add this title to their collection they were unable to locate, let alone use, this negative, which had suffered from irreversible deterioration.

Every single copy I have seen from the US (and there are many prints around) are dups and are heavily cut. Not only have several scenes completely gone (such as the sports stadium and nightclub), but Brigitte Helm's 'robot dance' at the reception is censored. None of this missing material, or the rediscovered scenes in Moroder's version, are in the insipid Aikman print.

London SE3

Songs of innocence

From William K. Everson

I particularly enjoyed Michael Moorcock's article 'Songs of Innocence' (S&S October) on Tom Mix's *My Pal the King*, not least because I also saw it at a kiddie matinee in England - in my case at the long extinct Regent in Hayes, Middlesex, back in 1933. And I shared some of the author's excitement and emotional involvement in seeing it again, many years later.

Since Moorcock is a novelist and not a historian, I hope he won't mind my correcting, for the record, a number of errors in his delightful piece. First of all, it's a 1933 film, not 1930. And secondly, Mix made nine talkie features, all for Universal, not two. (They were also followed by the inferior Mascot serial, *The Miracle Rider*.) *Destry Rides Again*, to which he also refers, was the first of the series and one of the weakest, having been made just after Mix was released from hospital for an appendicitis operation, and having to soft pedal the action.

I was rather surprised that Moorcock didn't mention the delightful scene where Mix gallops, in a sense, out of the picture to address the audience directly, asking it to see the upcoming show through the eyes of a young boy (Rooney), and then wheels back into the narrative again, setting up beautifully the larger-than-life story that follows. Also worth noting: in the film's original climax, the villain is disposed of rather ruthlessly, being thrown into the flooded dungeon from which Rooney has just been rescued. A close-up of bubbles rising to the surface leaves no doubt as to his fate. A later re-issue and the television prints did some judicious re-cutting, turning it into a com-



Songs of innocence:
Tom Mix rides again

edy scene without that grim undertone.

Some other quick points. Neither Art Acord or Fred Thomson "shrugged and hung up their saddles" when sound came in; Acord had hit the skids, was appearing in the odd cheap silent quickie, and died under mysterious circumstances. Thomson died much earlier, at his peak, as a star of Paramount silent Western specials.

While far too many silent Westerns have disappeared, Hart, Gibson, Maynard, Mix, McCoy and to a lesser extent Jones are well represented. Arguably some of Jones' and McCoy's best work was done in the early sound period, and virtually all of that is intact and in good condition, at least in this country. *My Pal the King* isn't widely shown here, but it exists on 35mm, 16mm and on tape, so is hardly a rarity. And finally, painted backdrops in small Westerns are conspicuous by their absence - usually they were limited to scenery outside a partially opened door or window of a studio set. For painted backdrops in Westerns, one really has to look to Cecil B. DeMille.

Tisch School of Arts, New York

After dinner mints

From Martin Kewitsch

I would like to add a voice to the debate which has sprung from William Phillips' letter (S&S October) about the BFI's representation of Britain through the films they are producing; particularly the short films via their New Directors scheme. I expect that Briony Hanson's letter (S&S November), which rebuked Phillips' comments, is the opinion of many other readers. But asking if Phillips is gay or black is irrelevant to the argument; you do not have to be Jewish to appreciate the holocaust.

I felt that Phillips laid out his argument rather well, despite shooting his own foot with his postscript. The comments made are the thoughts of many people, not those who remain cocooned in their small worlds of avant-garde cinema, but those who also visit mainstream cinema. At the moment, British cinema is the 'after dinner mint' of the film world; politely refused without upsetting the host. In their bid to represent the different cultures in this country, the BFI and many other local arts councils have forgotten those talented new directors who need the resources and encouragement to develop their skills in commercial and narrative film. We cannot afford to neglect these young film-makers; to reject them and let them starve in the wilderness is starving the British Film industry of some genuine talent. We need to develop young and new directors for mainstream 'main courses'. It can be done without sacrificing the art of film; the words 'contemporary mainstream success' can be said without someone on the other side of the world dying. I am not asking for film-makers who will produce a constant stream of Bruce

Contributors to this issue

Ian Christie has published numerous books on cinema

Peter Keough is film critic of *The Boston Phoenix*

Mike O'Pray is completing books on Adrian Stokes and on Derek Jarman

Tony Rayns' report on

Hong Kong for BBC radio was awarded the Arts Journalism prize in the BP Broadcasting Awards in 1991

B. Ruby Rich, a cultural critic, has recently been awarded a fellowship by the MacArthur

Willis-style action adventures; what is needed is a balance.

My fear is that the problem goes deeper than any arts body. Some responsibility has to go to the universities and colleges who offer film courses in this country. The students currently coming out of our colleges either end up making BFI shorts or writing bitchy remarks in *Time Out* and the like; fortunately some don't make it and end up working in record shops. The worst scenario is that one will end up being a BFI commissioner, and will produce another serving of pointless short films as we saw in October's issue of *Sight and Sound*.

Canterbury, Kent

Little revolution

From Joanna Woodward

I was delighted to find some truly appreciative literature on animation in the October issue of *Sight and Sound*. I am a film-maker who chooses to use animation in my work, because of the freedom that it allows me, and I can't tell you how disheartened I have been for years with the publications that specialise in animation.

Contemporary animated film works on many levels, and often tackles ambitious subject matter. However, much of the writing on animation seems to have turned a completely blind eye to the little revolution that has been going on in this area of film. Animation is often difficult to categorise: is it modern art, or is it film? Well, it has yet to be included in *Modern Painters*, so please continue to appreciate this very innovative form of cinema.

Shrunken Mortals, London SE13

Manikda

From Dilip Roy

It was a sheer delight to read the personal tributes paid to Satyajit Ray (S&S August). However, I would like to point out a mistake by Sir Richard Attenborough. In his tribute to Ray, he mentions that the name 'Manikda' was given to him by his crew members, but in fact it was a nickname given to him in childhood. The word *Manik* means jewel and *da* is a short form of *dada*, which means elder brother and is the way Bengalis address their elders as a form of respect, hence Manikda. Saeed Jaffrey makes the same mistake by calling him "brother jewel", which sounds rather odd.

Saeed Jaffrey is also incorrect about John Huston's visit to Calcutta. Huston visited Calcutta in 1954 (not 1955), where he was shown the rough cut of *Pathar Panchali* (the film was commercially released in Calcutta in 1955).

London W3

Corrections

In S&S November, page 10 Beirstadt should read Bierstadt; page 4, Fellini review, Zavattini should read Zavattini

Wide-screen dreams



'All wide-screen cinema is good for, the director George Stevens is said to have observed, is filming snakes'

Benjamin Woolley

Wide-screen cinema was first offered to the general public in 1952 with the launch of the Cinerama system. The idea of filling the audience's field of view with a larger image had been around since the beginning of the century. Abel Gance experimented with the idea in his 'triptych' sequences for *Napoléon*. But it was television that provided the stimulus for its mainstream introduction. Along with 3D, it was seen as a way of emphasising the benefits of the big screen over the small. And now television itself is set to respond.

The idea of wide-screen television began with the development of High Definition Television (HDTV). HDTV was to offer two benefits, both designed to make television more cinematic: pin-sharp picture quality (hence high definition) and a wide-screen 'aspect ratio' (the ratio of the screen's width to its height). The extra information needed to provide such benefits could not, however, be squeezed on to a conventional television signal, so HDTV was conceived as a premium service that satellite and cable operators would be able to offer in the mid-to-late-90s. In Europe, the system developed to introduce viewers to the benefits of

HDTV was MAC. Though initially offering only slightly better than standard definition on a standard square screen, it promised to pave a smooth upgrade path to full-blown HDTV.

But as with the ERM, the market had different ideas. And as with the ERM, the market prevailed. In the UK at least, MAC is now all but dead, and the mainstream introduction of HDTV looks increasingly uncertain.

For a while, this seemed to suggest that the era of the low-tech, square-eyed PAL picture was set to remain, much to the frustration of the television-set manufacturers as well as of the European Commission. However, a new system is now being tested that could revive the fortunes of wide-screen television. Called PALplus, it is an enhancement of the conventional PAL system used for extraterrestrial transmissions, and it is terrestrial broadcasters, including the BBC, rather than satellite and cable operators, who are currently promoting it.

The 'plus' part of PALplus is an extra, invisible signal added to the standard PAL picture information which, when picked up by a specially adapted set, is used to reconstruct a wide-screen version of the picture. It is thus a sort of video equivalent of stereo, promising enhanced performance but with-

out making existing equipment obsolete.

The television industry and broadcasters are firmly convinced that there is a demand for wide-screen television. Nevertheless, there are grounds for at least a touch of scepticism. All wide-screen cinema is good for, the director George Stevens is said to have observed, is filming snakes. We are told that it stimulates peripheral vision, but the human eye's total field of perception extends vertically almost as much as it does horizontally. To provide a more immersive experience, you arguably need a screen that is bigger, not just wider, as the spectacular Imax film format demonstrates.

Furthermore, it is unlikely that perception theory figured large in the cinema owners' choice to promote wide screens, rather than screens that were bigger in both dimensions. It is more likely that they found it cheaper to make an auditorium wider than to make it taller.

Whether it be the product of sound market research or unglamorous practicalities, there can be no doubt that what has given the dash for a wide-screen television format such impetus is the industry's desperation to find a new generation of technology to reinvigorate a saturated market. On top of that, there is a rich source of material shot in wide-screen format: movies. It is unarguable that television fails to do justice to films, which lie as comfortably on the square screen as a guest on Procrustes' bed.

What I would question is the involvement of the terrestrial broadcasters in promoting such high-tech, cinematic television. They argue that PALplus could help reinforce their position in an increasingly sophisticated market. But it could equally contribute to the creation of a sort of two-track television, with an early-adopting, conspicuous-consuming 'quality' audience occupying the fast track and the 'undiscriminating' viewing masses who are too poor to indulge in annual hardware upgrades in the slow track.

How can terrestrial broadcasters hope to provide for one without neglecting the other? They probably cannot. They will probably succeed only in creating a premium market for the satellite and cable television companies - an outcome that they should at least have started peripherally to perceive.

PROFESSOR POTEKIN'S COMPETITION

If your responses to our October quiz 'Anchors Aweigh' are anything to go by, we are no longer a maritime nation. The correct answers were: 1. 'Follow the Fleet'; 2. France (La Rochelle); 3. James Mason; 4. Montgomery Clift; 5. 'Noah's Ark'; 6. 'The Tarrin'; 7. Sterling Hayden; 8. A rhinoceros; 9. 'The Sea-Wolf'; 10. 'The Battleship Potemkin'. Our video prize goes to Alan Campy of Rotherham, the only wholly correct entrant.

You should find this month's quiz much easier. 'What the Dickens' celebrates the cinematic legacy of the nation's favourite

Christmas novelist. Reply in full by 15 December. The first two winners will each receive a video of Denys Arcand's 'Jesus of Montreal' and the Taviani brothers' 'Goodmorning Babylon'. Both these titles are released by Artificial Eye on 7 December (£15.99 each). We also have ten copies of 'The French Brothers Wild & Crazy Quiz Book' (an ideal Christmas present, published by Faber & Faber, £4.99) to give away to the runners-up. Answers on suitably festive postcards to Professor Potemkin, Sight and Sound, 21 Stephen Street, London W1P 1PL.

1. Which director set a version of 'Hard

Times' in modern-day Lisbon?

2. Name the young Dickens character destined for better things, as played at various times by John Mills and Michael York.

3. Which 60s Dickens adaptation had roles for Harry Secombe and Oliver Reed?

4. Who was the British sex symbol with a cameo role as a scullery maid in David Lean's 'Oliver Twist'?

5. What was the alternative title of the 'Reader's Digest' film version of 'The Old Curiosity Shop'?

6. Who dramatised the award-winning

television serialisations of 'Hard Times' (1977) and 'Bleak House' (1985)?

7. How was Part 1 of Christine Edzard's 'Little Dorrit' subtitled?

8. Which film version of a Dickens novelette begins with a military assault on Father Christmas' North Pole base?

9. Who, in 1935, played Aunt Betsy Trotwood and then Miss Pross in two Dickensian adaptations?

10. After appearing in four Dickens films, he forced James Wilby to read the collected works out loud in an Evelyn Waugh adaptation. Who is he?

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